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**Working to end sexual violence in Maryland**

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**Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 848**  
**Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel**  
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The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. MCASA urges the Finance Committee and the Budget & Taxation to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 848.

**Senate Bill 848 – Public Health Abortion Grant Program**

This bill establishes the Public Health Abortion Grant Program to provide grants to improve access to abortion care clinical services and improve access to abortion care clinical services.

**Access to abortion care is vital to survivors of rape.**

The CDC reports that almost 3 million women in the U.S. experienced Rape-Related Pregnancy (RRP) during their lifetime. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/understanding-RRP-inUS.html>

A three year longitudinal study of rape-related pregnancy in the U.S., published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology (1996, vol. 175, pp. 320-325), found:

5% of rape victims of reproductive age (age 12-45) became pregnant as a result of rape, with the majority of pregnancies in adolescents. Of these, half terminated the pregnancy, 5.9% placed the child for adoption, and 32.2% kept the child.

**Survivors of Reproductive Coercion Need Access to Abortion Care**

Reproductive coercion is a form of intimate partner violence where a woman's partner tries to control reproductive decisions by preventing access to or tampering with birth control, or forcing sexual intercourse with the intent of causing pregnancy. Of women who were raped by an intimate partner, 30% experienced a form of reproductive coercion by the same partner. Specifically, about 20% reported that their partner had tried to get them pregnant when they did not want to or tried to stop them from using birth control. About 23% reported their partner refused to use a condom. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/understanding-RRP-inUS.html>

**Senate Bill 848 will help provide survivors of rape and reproductive coercion with abortion care.**

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the  
Finance Committee and the Budget & Taxation Committee to  
report favorably on Senate Bill 848**