



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting House Bill 381 with Amendments **Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel** January 30, 2025

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. We urge the Health & Government Operations Committee to report favorably on House Bill 381 with Amendments.

House Bill 381 – Insurance Coverage for Cosmetic Surgery After Domestic Violence

House Bill 381 would require the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, health maintenance organizations, and managed care organizations to provide coverage to victims of domestic violence for certain aesthetic services and restorative care. MCASA joins our sister coalition, MNADV, and supports HB381, but offers a friendly amendment to include additional survivors, including survivors of sexual assault.

HB 381 will assist survivors of domestic violence who have aesthetic injuries caused by abuse by allowing them to move forward without the visible reminders of the violence they experienced.

As drafted HB 381 uses a restrictive definition of who would receive coverage. "Victim of domestic violence" means an individual who has received deliberate, severe, and demonstrable physical injury, or is in fear of imminent deliberate, severe, and demonstrable physical injury from a current or former spouse, or a current or former cohabitant, as defined in § 4–501 of this subtitle. This would *not* include victim survivors who have a child in common but are not married. Nor would it include someone who had been in a sexual relationship with their abuser within the past year. Nor would it include survivors of recent sex crimes. We concur in MNADV's suggestion for an amendment to "any person eligible for relief" pursuant Family Law §4-501. We note this still leaves open the broader question of providing this coverage for all victims of sexual assault, whenever the assault occurred, or even for all victims of violent crime. HB381 with the suggested amendments would, however, be a strong step forward for survivors.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Health & Government Operations Committee to
report favorably on House Bill 381 with Amendments**