



**Committee:** House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

**Bill:** House Joint Resolution - Criminal Law - Witchcraft - Exoneration

**Hearing Date:** March 10, 2025

**Position:** Support

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The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) supports *House Joint Resolution – Criminal Law Witchcraft Exemption*. The resolution exonerates individuals accused and convicted of witchcraft in Maryland and apologizes to their descendants to the harms caused to their descendants.

We support this resolution because witchcraft accusations in Maryland in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries targeted women, thus demonstrating that women did not have rights or legal standing to defend themselves.<sup>i</sup> Witchcraft accusations were often leveled at women who were healers, including midwives, in their communities. In 1626, Joan Wright, a midwife in Virginia, became the first English colonist accused of witchcraft.<sup>ii</sup>

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.mdhistory.org/double-double-toil-and-trouble-witchcraft-in-maryland/>

<sup>ii</sup> [\*"Witchcraft and gossip: Jamestown Settlement explores English women's interactions with the law in colonial era"\*. Daily Press. 10 September 2019. Retrieved 2022-10-23](#)