

## Testimony of Survivor “VP” Opposed to HB 1378

I am here to testify today, but I understand that the Senate is limiting the testimony on this Bill. I would have testified in person, and introduced myself but I am told that the Senate is limiting testimony. I am submitting this written testimony as quickly as I can. I don't understand how the legislature is giving this very important issue such little attention. This is one of the most significant Bills of this decade.

I am a survivor of abuse that happened at the Charles Hickey Juvenile Detention Center (the Maryland Training School for Boys). I was assaulted many times by a man named Mr. Nadir who was the housing unit manager. It started when I was 13 years old and it ended when I was released at 15 years old. The impact of this abuse has been life-long. It has changed my education, my ability to work and maintain a meaningful social life. This significant and traumatic abuse has caused irreparable harm. It was betrayal of the most inhumane kind. It was preventable.

I am now 57 years old and it is still difficult to discuss. In 2023 when the CVA was passed, it still took me a while to contact anyone. I needed to process whether I could deal with the memories and impact of these events. However, I was encouraged that the State was finally doing the right thing to help people like me who previously were horribly injured and then forgotten. I decided to come forward but it was not easy. And I understood that I still had a long road ahead. However, I never imagined the State of Maryland would then try to take away the good they had promised. It appears that Maryland is trying to circumvent its responsibility to its citizens for the damage it caused to our most vulnerable.

My psychiatrist encouraged me to come forward and I am still in therapy. I am so discouraged by the impact of this Bill. It denies justice and access to the court system in order to adjudicate the wrongs that have been done. This is unethical and immoral. This Amendment is unraveling the 2023 CVA and seeks to silence survivors.

Capping the recovery at \$400,000 per survivor will make bringing a case untenable. The burden on the survivor is already so significant and they still have to prove a case which is not easy and expensive. It will require experts and witnesses and therapists. Arbitrarily limiting the recovery without consideration of the abuse, the number of times a person was abused, how many abusers were involved is not right. This cap completely disregards the lifelong impact of childhood sexual abuse. This cap fails to provide any accountability.

The deadline imposed is also unfair. It forces people to come forward before they are ready. And that was not the spirit of the 2023 CVA. This Amendment guts the 2023 CVA and injures me and others all over again.