



Domestic Violence Legal Clinic

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Bill No.: House Bill 706
Bill Title: Intercepted Communications - Penalty
Committee: Judiciary
Hearing Date: February 11, 2025
Position: **FAV**

House of Ruth is a non-profit organization providing shelter, counseling, and legal services to victims of domestic violence throughout the State of Maryland. House of Ruth has offices in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Prince George's County, and Montgomery County. House Bill 706 would reclassify from felony to misdemeanor certain intercepted communications. **We urge the House Judiciary Committee to favorably report on House Bill 706.**

Under current law, violation of the wiretap statute is a felony. Many victims of intimate partner violence manage to record and document acts of abuse, but are prohibited or deterred from using these recordings as evidence because they would be subjected to prosecution for a felony. House Bill 706 would reclassify these violations as a misdemeanor, an important attempt to remediate Maryland's wiretap laws to increase safety for victims of intimate partner violence.

The House of Ruth urges the House Judiciary Committee to report favorably on House Bill 706.