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The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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SPONSOR TESTIMONY – HOUSE BILL 1350

Criminal Law – Fourth Degree Sexual Offense – Out-of-State Convictions

The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair Judiciary Committee

Maryland House of Delegates

6 Bladen Street, Room 101

Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Bartlett, and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee:

House Bill 1350 is designed to enhance penalties for repeat sex offenders by broadening the scope of what constitutes a predicate crime for sentencing enhancements. Specifically, the bill allows for prior convictions from other states or federal, military, or Native American tribal courts to serve as predicate crimes for enhanced penalties in Maryland.

Here's a breakdown of what the bill does:

1. **Closing Legal Loopholes:** In the current system, sex offenders with previous convictions from other states or federal courts may not face the same enhanced penalties as those with convictions within Maryland. HB 1350 would close this gap, ensuring that individuals with a history of sexual offenses are held accountable, regardless of where the offenses occurred. This could help protect women by preventing repeat offenders from exploiting differences between jurisdictions to avoid stricter penalties.
2. **Better Protection for Victims:** When repeat offenders face enhanced penalties, it can provide greater protection for women who may be at risk of being targeted by individuals who have previously committed sexual offenses. With stronger penalties, the justice system sends a clear message that sexual offenses will not be tolerated, and perpetrators will face significant consequences.

HB 1350 seeks to close gaps in the law by ensuring that individuals who commit sexual offenses, especially repeat offenders, are more likely to face significant consequences. This bill is intended to increase public safety and hold offenders accountable for their actions, regardless of where the initial conviction occurred.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lauren C. Arikan".

Delegate Lauren C. Arikan