



BILL NO: House Bill 929
TITLE: Family Law - Permanent Protective Orders - Consent
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: February 20, 2025
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the COMMITTEE to favorably report on HB 929.**

Currently, in order to get a permanent protection order against a respondent, there are certain very restrictive requirements that must be met. The respondent has to have been convicted and sentenced to serve a term of imprisonment of at least 5 years for the act of abuse that led to the issuance of the interim, temporary, or final protective order and the individual must have served at least 12 months of the sentence, or; during the term of the interim, temporary, or final protective order, the individual committed an act of abuse against the person eligible for relief; and the individual was convicted and sentenced to serve a term of imprisonment of at least 5 years for the act and must have served at least 12 months of the sentence.

House Bill 929 would allow a permanent order of protection to be entered if agreed upon by the respondent, without having to meet the above infrequent circumstances. In many instances the survivor does not prioritize the criminal sentence and rather just wants and needs the permanent protection order. A permanent protection order only keeps in place the “stay away” and “no contact” portion of the final protection order. We can think of no reason why, if a Respondent is willing to consent, the court should not be allowed to enter a permanent protection order in that instance.

When consent to an order of protection was passed by this body, it became a valuable way to obtain a *final* order of protection.¹ More permanent protection orders will provide more safety and security for survivors, allowing them to move forward in their lives without the fear of their abuser coming back.

¹ A final protection order is for the duration of up to one year, and up to two years in certain circumstances.
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For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence** urges a **favorable report on HB 929**.

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