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Environment and Transportation
Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

FAVORABLE

HB613 Criminal Procedure-Protection of Identity of Victim of Sexual Assault

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of HB613 which protects the privacy of sexual assault victims by redacting their names from easy access on public facing kiosks. Last year, this body passed legislation that redacts the names of minors from public facing documents and this bill simply adds sexual assault victims of all ages to those who are included in its privacy protections.

This committee is well aware of the stigma associated with sexual assault and the sensitive nature of this topic. As you will hear, the threat of being publicly named as a victim can discourage victims from reporting crimes of a sensitive nature and from pressing charges.

Currently, the name of any adult victim is easily accessible to any member of the public and not only those party to the case. When the need for this legislation was first brought to me, many of us were confused and already assumed that the identity of sexual assault victims were automatically redacted from the public. In fact, after spending a very long day at the Circuit Court in Towson and falling down many dark rabbit holes we easily discovered the names and other identifying information of sexual assault victims from almost every jurisdiction in all charging documents and even requests for translation and other services that were included in the case files.

This legislation does not restrict any party to the case from having access to necessary information. I urge support of HB 613 to support victims and encourage reporting of sexually assaultive behaviors.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Delegate Michele Guyton".

Delegate Michele Guyton
District 42B