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Judiciary Committee
100 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

HB0847 – Criminal Procedure - Domestic Violence Offender Registry

Position: **FAVORABLE**

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

My name is Ronnie L. Taylor, and I serve as the Advocacy, Policy, & Partnerships Director at FreeState Justice, a nonprofit organization committed to addressing legal and systemic inequities affecting Maryland's LGBTQIA+ community. As a survivor of domestic violence, I am here to express strong support for **HB0847**, which proposes the establishment of a Domestic Violence Offender Registry in Maryland.

HB0847 aims to tackle the pressing issue of repeat domestic violence offenders by creating a centralized registry. This initiative is particularly significant for marginalized communities, including LGBTQIA+ individuals, who experience intimate partner violence at rates equal to or higher than their heterosexual counterparts. Notably, only one in five survivors of same-sex partner violence seeks orders of protection, often due to fears of discrimination or being outed.

The bill requires individuals convicted three or more times of domestically related crimes to register with their county sheriff. This registry will:

- **Enhance Public Safety:** By providing accessible information about repeat offenders, communities can take informed precautions, potentially reducing further incidents of violence.
- **Support Law Enforcement:** A centralized database aids in monitoring high-risk individuals, facilitating timely interventions.
- **Empower Survivors:** Access to offender information enables survivors to make informed decisions about their safety and legal options.

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Research indicates a direct correlation between the number of prior convictions and the likelihood of recidivism. Specifically, the probability of reoffending increases from 24% for those with no prior felonies to 61% for individuals with seven prior felonies. This underscores the necessity of monitoring repeat offenders to prevent further abuse.

As a domestic violence survivor, I understand the profound impact such experiences have on one's life. Fear and trauma are often compounded by LGBTQIA+ individuals due to additional layers of stigma and discrimination. Implementing this registry is a vital step toward creating a safer environment for all Maryland residents, ensuring that repeat offenders are known and monitored.

In closing, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report for **HB0847**. This legislation not only addresses a critical gap in our public safety infrastructure but also reinforces Maryland's commitment to protecting all its citizens, including those in the LGBTQIA+ community.

Best,

Ronnie L. Taylor

Ronnie L. Taylor

Sources:

1. [*The LGBTQIA+ community... - Women's Law Center of Maryland / Facebook*](#)
2. [*Domestic Violence Reoffending - Public Health Post*](#)
3. [*A Decade of Data: Meta-Analysis of Data and Insights on the Experiences of LGBTQIA+ People in Maryland*](#)
4. [*2023 DVFRSIT Report*](#)
5. [*MD-DVFRSIT 2021-2022 First Annual Report FINAL.pdf*](#)
6. [*HRC / Understanding Intimate Partner Violence in the LGBTQ+ Community*](#)
7. [*72_3_6_0.pdf*](#)