



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting House Bill 670
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The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute which provides direct legal services for survivors across the State of Maryland. We urge the Judiciary Committee to report favorably on House Bill 670.

House Bill 670 – Cyberflashing

This bill criminalizes sending obscene material to another when the sender knows or reasonably should know that the material is unsolicited, often referred to as “cyberflashing”. House Bill 670 also provides for a civil cause of action for persons suffering harm as a result of these actions

Roughly one in eight adults in the United States have experienced sexually explicit image-based abuse.¹ This number is continuing to grow, with young adults, women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community being among the most vulnerable.² This issue also impacts a large number of youth, though exact numbers are unknown because youth are more likely to attempt to resolve the issue among peers for fear of judgment from adults.³ Victims of non-consensual pornography often report fears of going out in public, decreased trust in relationships, employment challenges, difficulty seeking help, and increased depression and anxiety.

House Bill 670 is a comprehensive and well drafted bill which maintains protection for constitutional rights to free speech, while protecting people from disturbing and harmful intrusions on their cell phones and other devices.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judiciary Committee to
report favorably on House Bill 670**

¹ <https://www.bu.edu/sph/news/articles/2020/the-social-consequences-of-nonconsensual-pornography/>

² <https://www.naag.org/attorney-general-journal/an-update-on-the-legal-landscape-of-revenge-porn/>

³ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/14732254211030570>