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**WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND**  
**THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

February 10, 2025

To: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair  
Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Vice Chair  
Judiciary Committee

On behalf of the Maryland Women's Caucus, we are pleased to express our strong support for **HB629: Civil Actions - Immunity - Disclosure of Allegations of Sexually Assaultive Behavior (Stop Silencing Survivors Act)**, sponsored by Delegate Bartlett and Senator Love. This vital legislation provides critical legal protections for survivors of sexual violence who choose to speak out, ensuring they are not silenced by retaliatory lawsuits.

Sexual assault remains one of the most underreported and under-prosecuted crimes in America. Yet, when survivors bravely come forward, they too often face intimidation through defamation lawsuits—tactics designed to retraumatize, financially burden, and discourage them from sharing their experiences. HB629 ensures that those who disclose their assault in good faith are protected from these retaliatory legal actions, while still preserving the right to sue for knowingly false or malicious allegations.

This bill is not just about legal protection—it is about justice, accountability, and ensuring that Maryland stands with survivors rather than silencing them. The vast majority of sexual assault survivors are women, and without these protections, many will remain unheard, fearing the legal consequences of speaking out. HB629 sends a clear message that Maryland supports survivors and will not allow the legal system to be weaponized against them.

We respectfully urge the Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report for HB629. By passing this legislation, Maryland will take an essential step toward supporting survivors, protecting free and truthful speech, and ensuring that those who commit sexual violence cannot use the courts to evade accountability.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your commitment to justice and to making Maryland a safer, more equitable state for all.