



BILL NO: House Bill 130  
TITLE: Intercepted Communications - Penalty  
COMMITTEE: Judiciary  
HEARING DATE: January 28, 2025  
POSITION: **Support**

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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 House Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 130.**

Maryland requires the consent of every party to a phone call or conversation to make a recording lawful. Currently, a violation of the wiretap law is a felony and subject to punishment including imprisonment for not more than 5 years or a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both.

House Bill 130 would reclassify a violation of the wiretap law from a felony to a misdemeanor. MNADV supports a victim's ability to use a recording of the violence they suffered in court proceedings. Currently it is a felony for a victim, including victims of domestic violence, to audio record and document the abuse and violence they experienced and use it to obtain relief from the courts. All too often, people experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault have to be told that they cannot use audio recording of the assault lest they be charged with a felony. And, perhaps even worse, although they have incontrovertible evidence of the assault perpetrated, they cannot use it as evidence in court.

HB 130 is an important attempt to remediate Maryland's wiretap laws. There are several other bills this year that are taking other approaches, including HB 314, which we commend to the Committee.

For the above stated reasons, the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a **favorable report on HB 130.**

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