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TESTIMONY ON HB#/0241- POSITION: FAVORABLE
Marriage - Confidential Communication

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0241, **Marriage - Confidential Communication**

This bill is a statement that Maryland protects individuals who have been victimized by a former intimate partner by permitting testimony of events during a relationship whenever a crime between those persons in that relationship has been charged.

The bill expands the ability of the affected victim to aid in bringing their partner or former partner to justice when they commit a crime against that victim. The bill will serve in clarifying that "spouse" includes a former spouse for purposes of disclosure of confidential communications occurring during marriage; and establishing that a spouse, who is the alleged victim, is competent to disclose a confidential communication between spouses occurring during their marriage in a criminal action in which one spouse is charged with a crime against the other spouse.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), approximately 1 in 4 women in Maryland will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. The rates in Maryland are 34.4% for women and 28.8% for men.¹ These statistics show how vital it is that we add to prosecutor's toolbox a methodology to attack this problem headon.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0241.

¹ <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/domestic-violence-by-state>