



TESTIMONY FOR HB0847
Criminal Procedure – Domestic Violence Offender Registry

Bill Sponsor: Delegate McCaskill

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0847 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Domestic violence is a crime that too often does not result in a criminal record, yet it is a horrible crime and those who are convicted and then given probation or a suspended sentence should be known. For someone who is running for office, or who is being considered for a powerful position, or even who is getting married again, this information should not be buried only to come to light way too late.

This bill would establish a Domestic Violence Offender Registry, similar to the Sex Offender Registry, in the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. Any person who has been convicted of domestic violence acts, regardless of whether they are given probation, a suspended sentence, or are not sentenced to jail time, would have to register with the county sheriff who would then forward the information to the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. The person who has been convicted would have their name on the registry for a minimum of 15 years (longer for convictions after they are on the registry).

Just like sex offenses, the public should know about domestic violence offenders. We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.