



**Maryland | Delaware | DC Press Association**

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To: Judiciary Committee

From: Rebecca Snyder, Executive Director, MDDC Press Association

Date: March 24, 2025

Re: **HB1378 – Favorable with Amendments**

The Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Press Association represents a diverse membership of newspaper publications located in Baltimore City, including the Baltimore Sun, The Daily Record, The Baltimore Business Journal, The Baltimore Times, The AFRO, Baltimore Brew and the Baltimore Banner. These organizations serve to inform the community and serve as an accountability watchdog for the public.

The Press Association has grave concerns about the public accountability of the newly-created “Alternative Dispute Resolution Program for Child Sexual Abuse Claims Against the State” that is proposed in the amendments to HB 1378. Overall, the bill would prevent survivors of child sexual abuse from filing claims against the State of Maryland after January 2026 if the claim would have been time barred prior to October 1, 2023.

At the time of this writing, the work of the newly-created program will be performed by an undesignated “state entity” that will be chosen by a workgroup that is not subject to the Open Meetings Act or the Public Information Act. The ADR work will be performed by third parties that are not subject to procurement rules. We understand the amendment language may be evolving further.

As those discussions continue, MDDC strongly urges the committee to bring the work of the program and its formation under the OMA and PIA. The claims of child sexual abuse survivors are serious and in the public interest and the work of these groups should not be in the dark. We urge the committee to increase transparency of these efforts.

Without these amendments, we urge an unfavorable report.



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