



March 10, 2026

House Health Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, MD

Re: HB 1293 - Behavioral Health Programs – Residents at Inpatient Facilities – Sex Offender 2
Registry Compliance

Dear House Health Committee Members,

I'm writing to ask you to issue a favorable report for HB 1293.

I helped someone this year who reported to me that he was assigned the same room with a resident, during a mental health commitment, that was a sex offender. He alleges he was sexually abused as a young person, and on multiple occasions groped by police during searches that he believed were predatory and meant to humiliate and scare him. Being roomed with someone who turned out to be a sex offender triggered his traumatic memories. Imagine: you need mental health treatment and are told you are in a safe place where you can receive it... and if you just cooperate it'll get better... but in order to cooperate, you have to tolerate sleeping in the same quarters as an unrepentant sex offender that reminds you of what you went through. I hope you never have to.

It is emotionally and mentally exhausting to disclose childhood sex abuse. Not just for a day, like a hard day at work. But for weeks before and after a disclosure, survivors suffer intrusive memories, sleeplessness, mania, depression, anxiety, physical manifestations of stress, humiliation and embarrassment, low self-worth, and thoughts of suicide, and a long list of other uncomfortable and hard to manage issues related to confronting and discussing their traumatic memories. It is an assault on the senses and your sense of self that takes years to recognize and manage.

Furthermore, survivors of sexual assault and childhood sex abuse don't exclusively encounter mental health services specifically and directly for their history of being abused. It may be other diagnoses or issues that cause them to seek treatment. Often, it's substance abuse treatment or therapy that helps people find safe ways to talk about it. Sometimes it's another traumatic event that triggers old memories. This was my case in February 2015 which led to a cascade of memories and subsequent reports to therapists, physicians, and police about what I'd been through before that assault. All the multiple sexual assaults I've experienced were reported, but none have been prosecuted. I can't change this fact. And it does affect me, but working on childhood sexual abuse cases in the last 3+ years as a law clerk has been very rewarding as a survivor.



Survivors don't always open up to mental health professionals about what they've went through right away, either. They often need to establish that they trust you or whatever professional they decide to disclose to. Sometimes, there's no time to establish trust in a mental health emergency and I think behavioral health providers with an interest in this bill could describe that better than I could. The point is, we should not be putting the burden on survivors to find this kind of thing out and ask for a change. The burden should be on the facility and the offender.

I also worked on a case a few years ago where a Maryland man was housed in jail with his former abuser. Again, it triggered his traumatic memories and caused him a lot of anguish and fear.

I've worked in the legal field for several years before I passed the bar and swore in. While I was healing from the 2015 incident, I was able to finish a bachelor's in psychology, a master of science in criminal justice and my law degree.

The last thing that I think is important to note, is a story about a man who used to live on Powers Ave in Baltimore County. In July 2025, after his son was sentenced for shooting two police officers, he put his house up for sale, and his name came off the Maryland Sex Offender Registry for Production of CSAM. The allotted time that needed to pass for him to get off the registry had not. It had only been a few years. I just recently learned that in some states the CSAM cases are on a private registry as if they're a lesser offense. My issue with this bill at this stage is only that I don't know how we are going to handle Offenders whose registry information was suppressed from public view in other states whose laws do not reflect the will of the MGA on who should have to register as a sex offender and whose information should be public. Child predators involved with CSAM are notorious for finding one another and I hope that was the only motivation for suppressing their information. However, as a parent, I think it should be public. How else could we hold them accountable. I hope that you can take time during the hearing to consider the issue of how to incorporate the suppressed backgrounds or explain how the bill already does that.

I will refrain to comment on appropriate penalties.

All that said, please pass this bill favorably out of committee, or favorably with amendments.

Sincerely,

E. L. Reid, Esq.