



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting House Bill 1294
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The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on House Bill 1294.

House Bill 1294 -- Child Pornography/Child Sexual Abuse Materials

This bill seeks to update Maryland's law on child pornography in two ways. First, it adds "IMAGES CREATED THROUGH THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SOFTWARE" to "computer generated image". Second, it replaces the phrase "child pornography" with "child sexual abuse materials."

House Bill 1294 changes the phrase "child pornography" to "child sexual abuse materials" throughout the code. This is an update to language and does not change the meaning of the law or have other substantive effect. It does, however, more accurately label the images and is consistent with current terminology used in the field.

Victims portrayed in child sexual abuse materials suffer long lasting and repeated harm. They are sexual abused during the creation of the images, and then these victims experience repeated harm as the pictures of their abuse are circulated. The material travels the web, around the world, and is shared by the sex offenders interested in exploiting children by viewing their sexual abuse. Our law should name this crime for what it is: child sexual abuse materials.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on House Bill 1294**