

Good Afternoon. I am a TurnAround Inc client. I'd like to thank each of you for this opportunity to be heard, on behalf of the many survivors of intimate partner violence in the state of Maryland.

In my experience as a survivor of intimate partner violence, this bill would have positively impacted my safety by giving me more time of protection from my abuser. By giving me more time, this bill would have made me feel more protected and supported by the judicial system.

During the process of filing protection orders against my abuser I faced many difficulties. While attempting to cooperate with systems meant to protect and support victims, I faced more barriers, such as experiencing violations of the protection orders and experiencing victim blaming from the system. Due to the financial abuse I experienced during the relationship, I lost access to financial stability when exiting. In my case, because I did not meet certain criteria for financial relief I was exposed to the vulnerability of insecurity of my financial security and wellness. While my situation has allowed me to exit my abuse and be free from my abuser, many survivors will not be able to experience the same outcome without this bill's success.

By supporting this piece of legislation you would be impacting victims and survivors to be free of the terror many face as a result of shorter windows of protection orders and length of time between requesting a protection order and the final hearing. The relief order would eliminate existing barriers for survivors to access services, engage in recovery and healing, and find stability beyond their traumas. I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 433.