

SB0531\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
02/17/2026  
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**TESTIMONY ON SB#0531 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**  
**Criminal Procedure - Victims of Sexually Assaultive Behavior - Request for Verbal Acknowledgement (Verbal Waiver Transparency Act)**

**TO:** Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#/0531, **Criminal Procedure - Victims of Sexually Assaultive Behavior - Request for Verbal Acknowledgement (Verbal Waiver Transparency Act)**

The Illinois Attorney General created *Revised Comprehensive Guidelines reflect an evidence-based, trauma-informed, victim-centered approach to responding to and investigating sexual assault and sexual abuse, including responding to victims who are under 13 years of age at the time the sexual assault or sexual abuse occurred*<sup>1</sup>

The trauma of sexual assault and sexual abuse often leads to significant emotional, physical, and economic consequences for the victim. The diminished ability of victims to recover from their sexual assault or sexual abuse has been directly linked to the response of others to their trauma. The response of law enforcement can directly impact a victim's ability to heal as well as his or her willingness to actively participate in the investigation by law enforcement.

Victim participation is critical to the successful identification and prosecution of sexual offenders, which can prevent new victimization. For this reason, improving the response of the criminal justice system to victims of sexual assault and sexual abuse is critical to protecting public safety.

Maryland can recognize the negative effects on victims of sexual crimes by protecting those victims from inappropriate law enforcement conduct during an investigation.

This bill can make that happen by prohibiting a law enforcement agency from making a certain request for verbal acknowledgement in an interaction with a person suspected to have been subjected to sexually assaultive behavior or who claims to have been subjected to sexually assaultive behavior.

Maryland can avoid revictimization of someone who has had this crime committed against them.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0531.**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/Page-Attachments/Law\\_Enforcement\\_Sexual\\_Assault\\_Response\\_Policy-ComprehensiveGuidelines.pdf](https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/Page-Attachments/Law_Enforcement_Sexual_Assault_Response_Policy-ComprehensiveGuidelines.pdf)