



BILL NO: House Bill 819
TITLE: **Commission to Examine the Expungement Laws of Maryland**
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: March 3, 2026
POSITION: **FAVORABLE with Amendment**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that works to lead diverse community partners toward the common purpose of reducing the occurrence and impact of intimate partner violence. **MNADV urges the House Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 819.**

House Bill 819 would create a commission to examine Title 10, Subtitle 1 of the Criminal Procedure Article for the purpose of redesigning the statute for efficiency and equity. Our expungement laws have been passed, amended and otherwise developed in a piecemeal manner which has created a morass of inexplicable qualifications, disqualifications, and other complexities when anyone is trying to navigate a possible expungement. A comprehensive Commission comprised of a wide variety of stakeholders is the best way to try to cogently express our policy viewpoint, and to simplify and update our expungement laws.

For survivors of domestic violence, navigating an overly complex expungement process is more than a legal hurdle; it is a critical step toward economic independence and safety, as clearing past records can remove barriers to the stable housing and employment necessary to break the cycle of abuse. Simplifying this legal 'morass' is a matter of restorative justice for survivors, ensuring that the heavy burden of navigating bureaucratic complexities does not become an additional barrier to the stability and self-sufficiency they have or are working so hard to reclaim.

Our amendment, which we consider friendly, asks that MNADV be added as a member, as “the Executive Director of the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence or their designee” or “the state domestic violence coalition.”

We commend you to The Human Trafficking Prevention Project’s written testimony, which details the development of this area of law and why it needs to be reviewed.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on HB 819 with amendment.**

For further information contact Laure Ruth ■ Public Policy Director ■ 301-852-3930 ■ lruth@mnadv.org

1997 Annapolis Exchange Parkway, Suite 300 ■ Annapolis, MD 21401
Tel: 301-429-3601 ■ E-mail: info@mnadv.org ■ Website: www.mnadv.org