



Bill No: HB465  
Title: Civil Actions - Immunity - Disclosure of Allegations of Sexually Assaultive Behavior (Stop Silencing Survivors Act)  
Committee: Judiciary  
Hearing: February 11, 2026  
Position: FAVORABLE

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The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women's groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW's purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. **HB465- Civil Actions - Immunity - Disclosure of Allegations of Sexually Assaultive Behavior (Stop Silencing Survivors Act)** is a priority on our [2026 Legislative Agenda](#) and we urge your support.

**[HB465- Civil Actions - Immunity - Disclosure of Allegations of Sexually Assaultive Behavior \(Stop Silencing Survivors Act\)](#)** creates additional protections from retaliatory litigation for sexual assault survivors.

Sexual assault continues to be one of the most under-reported and under-prosecuted crimes in America. In Maryland and across the country, rapists are using retaliatory lawsuits to silence those who speak out about sexual violence. Survivors are being subjected to expensive, retraumatizing, and drawn-out litigation, and some are discouraged from ever speaking out.

Of all adult women residing in Maryland, 23.6%, or about 539,291 adult women, have experienced some form of completed or attempted rape in their lifetime. About 54.3%, or 1,240,828 of Maryland's women, and more than 30.7% of Maryland's men, about 674,025, have experienced other forms of sexual violence. (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2016/2017 Report on SA Data Brief.)

This bill would provide protection from retaliatory litigation for survivors who disclose sexual assault in good faith, while preserving the right to sue for intentional or reckless disclosure of false information or malicious allegations of assault. It is fair and it is needed for survivors, the majority of whom are women. The bill would provide sexual assault survivors with the same protections that are currently given to employers providing employment references. It provides a practical and effective way to discourage sex offenders from using the courts to silence survivors.

Nearly 1 out of every 5 American women, 18 years or older, has been the victim of at least one attempted or completed rape in her lifetime. (National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 Data Brief.) This bill will help empower survivors who choose to disclose sexual assault and will help make our communities safer by making it more likely that sex offenders will be identified and held accountable.

**MLAW strongly urges the passage of HB465.**

**Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women**  
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## MLAW 2026 Supporting Organizations

The following organizations have signed on in support of our 2026 Legislative Agenda\*:

AAUW Anne Arundel County  
AAUW Kensington-Rockville Branch  
AAUW Maryland  
AAUW Garrett Branch  
American Association of University Women Howard County Branch  
Baltimore County Commission for Women  
Bound for Better, advocates for Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse  
Campaign for Eneshal Galloway at Large Candidacy  
Carroll County Chapter NOW  
Crabs On The Shore  
Jack and Jill of America Western Maryland Chapter  
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA)  
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV)  
Maryland NOW  
Montgomery County Business and Professional Women  
Montgomery County Commission for Women  
Montgomery County Chapter, National Organization for Women  
National Association of University Women, Prince George's County  
NAUW  
Postpartum Support International, Maryland  
Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.  
Self-Reflections: Social-Emotional, Behavioral and Advocacy Services, LLC  
Stella's Girls, Incorporated  
SUB&S LLC  
The Heart Nest  
The Rest Of A Life (TROAL)  
Top Ladies of Distinction, Incorporated, Patuxent River Chapter  
Unrooted Culture  
Women's Commission for Baltimore City  
Women's Equity Center and Action Network  
Women's Law Center of Maryland  
Zonta Club of Annapolis

*\*As of 2/2/2026*