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February 20, 2026

The Honorable Sandy Bartlett  
Chairperson, House Judiciary Committee  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB132

Dear Chairperson Bartlett and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am a prosecutor in Calvert County, in charge of the Child Abuse, Child Exploitation, and Sexual Assault cases. I have been a prosecutor for the past 22 years. During my career I have handled numerous cases involving Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, Murder, and Sexual Assaults. I write to you today in support of HB132, Wiretapping & Electronic Surveillance- Intercepted Communications- Admissibility of Evidence.

Currently, Courts & Judicial Proceedings Section 10-405 prohibits the use or derivative use of any evidence that is obtained in violation of the Maryland Wiretap Statute. House Bill 132 allows the Court, after a hearing, to receive evidence obtained in violation of the Maryland Wiretap Statute if it involves a crime committed against at least one individual, or if it involves a hate crime.

Years ago, I had a rape case. The victim in this case was raped by her estranged husband during a visitation with their 2-year-old daughter. The victim hesitantly brought her daughter to the Defendant's home, but the Defendant used this visit as a time to confront the victim. The Defendant was angry because she would not consider reconciling. He begged her to reconsider, and when she wouldn't, he pulled out a gun and put it to her head. He then forcibly raped her while her 2-year-old lay sleeping in the next room. Because she knew of his violent tendencies, the victim turned on the recording function of her phone immediately prior to entering the house. Her phone recorded the entire encounter. After the rape, she was able to convince him to let her leave. She went immediately to the police station. The next several months prior to trial, the Defendant and his family disparaged the victim, called her a liar, claimed she was trying to get custody of their child, and claimed that they had consensual sex that evening. Sadly, I had to explain to her that even though the entire assault and rape was recorded, I could not admit it as evidence in his trial.

Violent crimes, especially those involving sexual assault and domestic violence, happen behind closed doors. Sometimes the only evidence is the Victim's statement. The victims of these crimes often face inappropriate questioning, victim-blaming, criticism of their behaviors, and challenges to their credibility.

Cell phones can give power to victims of violent crimes. I strongly urge this Committee to issue a favorable report on HB132.

Sincerely,

*Rebecca Cordero*

Rebecca Cordero  
Senior Assistant State's Attorney  
Calvert County State's Attorney's Office