

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.



HB1005 - Child Abuse and Neglect – Reporting (Survivor Reporting Reform Act)

House Judiciary Committee

February 26, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1992 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to educate and promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC urges a favorable report on HB1005 - Child Abuse and Neglect - Reporting (Survivor Reporting Reform Act).**

An adult survivor of child abuse who has not reported the maltreatment they experienced under the age of 18 may be placed in a difficult position when disclosing about their trauma to someone who is a mandatory reporter – most likely a mental health practitioner. Like many other states, it is a criminal offense in Maryland for a mandatory reporter to fail to report the alleged abuse to appropriate authorities. If there are currently children under the care or control of the alleged abuser, there is an urgency to collect relevant information to complete the mandatory report to help prevent harm to anyone who may be vulnerable as well as help track the alleged violations of the accused for the purposes of justice and accountability in both the criminal justice and civil court actions. It is currently unclear in Maryland how an adult survivor should document the abuse and with which authority that record should be submitted, especially if the abuse occurred across state lines.

HB1005 seeks to identify the process for Maryland of ways the abuse could be documented as well as the degree the adult survivor could influence whether an investigation should commence and their willingness to be contacted by the authorities. This is a very complicated issue which warrants much time and consideration in gathering the perspectives of survivors, health practitioners, local social service agencies, law enforcement, victim assistance, and state attorney's office personnel. The bill's language focuses primarily on the development of a form, but the process itself including identifying clear and comprehensive policies and procedures will conclude May 1, 2028.

Our coalition welcomes an inclusive process which seeks to consider all factors and allow survivors the ability to help guide the outcome. It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **a favorable report on HB1005 - Child Abuse and Neglect - Reporting (Survivor Reporting Reform Act).**¹

¹ Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include – the American Academy of Pediatrics - Maryland Chapter, Child Justice, Citizen's Review Board for Children, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA - Baltimore County), The Family Tree, Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY), and the State Council on Child Abuse & Neglect (SCCAN).