

February 9, 2026

The Honorable Luke Clippinger

Chair, Judiciary Committee

101 House Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for HB 465, Stop Silencing Survivors Act

Dear Chair Clippinger,

Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU) respectfully submits this letter in strong support of House Bill 465, Stop Silencing Survivors Act, which is before the House Judiciary Committee. This bill limits the use of nondisclosure agreements that prevent survivors of sexual assault and harassment from speaking about their experiences.

Survivors of sexual violence often face pressure to remain silent through contractual agreements that protect perpetrators and institutions rather than victims. Research from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center shows that nondisclosure agreements contribute to underreporting and perpetuate cycles of abuse, particularly for survivors who fear retaliation or immigration consequences. Immigrant survivors are especially vulnerable to coercion due to language barriers and power imbalances. Source <https://www.nsvrc.org>.

HB 465 restores agency to survivors by restricting the enforceability of nondisclosure provisions related to sexual misconduct. This policy change promotes transparency, accountability, and healing while preserving survivor choice. States that have enacted similar protections have seen increased reporting and improved institutional accountability. Source <https://www.rainn.org>.

Implications for Latino and immigrant Marylanders

For immigrant and Latina survivors, HB 465 expands freedom and safety by ensuring that silence is not imposed as a condition of justice or recovery. The ability to speak openly supports healing, community awareness, and prevention. MLU can amplify the bill's impact by partnering with survivor advocacy organizations to provide culturally responsive education, legal referrals, and support services that center survivor autonomy.

MLU urges the Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 465.

Sincerely,

Carlos Orbe, Jr.

Communications and Public Affairs Specialist

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