

HB0450_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
02/10/2026
Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703-7134

TESTIMONY ON HB#0450 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Criminal Procedure – Protection of Identity of Victim of Sexual Assault or Stalking

TO: Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and members of the Judiciary Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0450, **Criminal Procedure – Protection of Identity of Victim of Sexual Assault or Stalking**

This bill makes Maryland’s policy for victims of sexual assault or stalking a humane and ethical choice for protection of their identity.

The Office for Victims of Crime, United States Department of Justice, says that ¹

Stalking is a crime of power and control. It is a course of action directed at an individual that causes the victim to fear for their safety, and generally involves repeated visual or physical proximity, nonconsensual communication, and verbal, written, or implied threats.

[Research shows](#) that victims of stalking are more likely to experience anxiety, insomnia, social dysfunction, and severe depression compared to the general population.

The Pennsylvania Coalition to Advance Respect and the the National Sexual Violence Resource Center and MaleSurvivor discussed normal behaviors that are common for survivors of sexual abuse: ²

Victim privacy is a basic need. The identity of sexual abuse victims should be protected.

Keeping victim names private protects victims from further re-victimization that can occur when they lose control of their very personal and painful story or when members of their community or the public at large blame, question, diHBelieve or harass them.

This bill will acknowledge these harms that can occur and put a stop to them in Maryland by prohibiting a court or a party in a criminal or juvenile delinquency case from disclosing or allowing inspection of a certain court filing or record to a nonparty unless the court or the party redacts certain identifying information relating to a certain victim of sexual assault or victim of stalking that appears in the filing or record, subject to a certain exception; etc.

These protections are long overdue and should be made part of Maryland law as soon as possible.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0450.

¹ <https://ovc.ojp.gov/topics/stalking>

² <https://pcar.org/blog/common-victim-behaviors-survivors-sexual-abuse>