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WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February 10, 2026

To: Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Chair

Delegate Debra Davis, Vice Chair

Judiciary Committee

Dear Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express its support for **HB 450 – Criminal Procedure – Protection of Identity of Victims of Sexual Assault or Stalking**.

HB 450 expands protections under § 11-301 by prohibiting a court or party in a criminal or juvenile delinquency proceeding from disclosing or permitting inspection of a court filing or record containing identifying information of a victim of sexual assault or stalking unless that information is properly redacted. The bill ensures that identifying information may not be disclosed to a non-party absent a compelling reason and requires redaction in both electronic and paper records, including charging documents.

This legislation strengthens privacy safeguards for victims by ensuring that sensitive identifying information is not publicly accessible through court records. Survivors of sexual assault and stalking already face significant emotional, psychological, and safety concerns. Public disclosure of their identities can expose them to retaliation, harassment, intimidation, and additional trauma.

For the Maryland Women's Caucus, HB 450 aligns directly with our mission to protect and advance the well-being of women and girls across the State. Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by sexual violence and stalking. Protecting victim confidentiality reduces stigma, supports survivor safety, and removes barriers that may discourage reporting.

By reinforcing privacy protections within court proceedings, HB 450 promotes survivor-centered justice while preserving judicial transparency through appropriate redaction rather than concealment of proceedings.

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus respectfully urges a **favorable report on HB 450**.