



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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**Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 336 with Amendments**  
**Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel**  
February 3, 2021

The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 336 with Amendments.

**Senate Bill 336 – State and Local Procurement – Payment Practices**

This bill would require that state and local governments to make payments under procurement contracts within 15 days (instead of 30) and provide vendors with interest on payments that are not paid timely.

The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault strongly urges the Committee to amend SB336 to apply to grant agreements with non-profit agencies.

Nonprofit rape crisis centers around the state report delays receiving reimbursement for services provided to survivors of sexual assault. Most grants for rape crisis services are reimbursed on a quarterly basis, meaning that community based non-profits are fronting funds for four or more months before being reimbursed. For example, reimbursement for salary paid the first week of January could not be requested until the close of the quarter, March 30<sup>th</sup>. It is not unusual for the State to take another 30-40 days to then provide the funds. Contrast this with the federal government, which not only provides reimbursement for funds expended within a matter of a 2 or 3 days, it also permits grantees to request funds that will be expended in the following 10 days. For example, a grantee with payroll on Friday could request needed funds today because the funds would be expended within 10 days. SB336 would not bring state agencies to the standard of federal reimbursement practices, but it would be an improvement.

It is important to remember that non-profits have many of the same responsibilities as other small businesses: payroll, rent, health insurance for employees, utility payments, etc. The failure to provide timely reimbursements to grantees creates serious cash-flow issues for smaller non-profits. One reports that they came close to missing payroll during the December holiday season in 2020 – during the pandemic – because grants funds were held over 50 days. This is simply not acceptable.

The state is not providing grant funds promptly. SB336, with the suggested amendment, would help non-profit organizations provide vital services that Marylanders need.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault**  
**urges the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee to**  
**report favorably on Senate Bill 336**