



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 515
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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 Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 515.

Senate Bill 515 addresses an unintended loophole in Maryland's laws regarding registered sex offenders and entry onto school property.

Adults (people over 18) are placed on the sex offender registry if they are convicted of certain crimes. Crim.Pro. §11-701, *et seq.* Juveniles can be placed on the sex offender registry if they are tried and convicted of a sex offense as an adult. Certain juvenile offenders can also be placed on a juvenile registry if they committed an offense that falls under Crim.Pro. §11-704.1.

Criminal Procedure §11-722 currently permits registered sex offenders to enter real property where a school is located if the sex offender is a student and has written permission, granted within the past year, from the Superintendent of Schools, the local school board, or the principal of the school AND notifies the school of the offender's presence and purpose of the visit.

In 2017, Santino Sudano was arrested and charged with second-degree rape in an incident involving a 13-year-old girl. He pleaded guilty to and was convicted of second-degree assault and a fourth-degree sex offense. He was convicted and required to register as a sex offender. In Fall 2018, he enrolled as a student at Parkville High School. He was subsequently charged with committing another sex offense against another student. This bill is a result of this case.

HB515 eliminates the exception allowing a student sex offender to be on school grounds and directs that a student-offender receive an education either through the "Home and Hospital Teaching Program" or by attending a Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents. This would ensure that young offenders continue to receive an education and also protect other students. MCASA notes that the Board of Child Care submitted a letter of information regarding educational needs of young offenders, many of whom are also victims of sexual abuse themselves. The Committee may wish to consider incorporating additional educational alternatives into the bill.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 515**