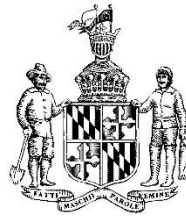


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Maryland General Assembly  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Favorable Report for Senate Bill 268

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee:

According to the National Children's Advocacy Center 1 in 10 children are sexually abused before the age of 18 and 15% of all sexual assault victims are between the ages of 12 and 17. 90% of children who are victims of sexual abuse know their abuser, 30% of are abused by family member and 60% are abused by a person the family trusts. The vast majority of these cases fall under the Sexual Abuse of a Minor Statute in Maryland, a crime that is currently only considered a crime of violence if the victim is 12 or younger.

It is hard to imagine anything more violent than the sexual assault of our children, and yet our current law has determined that minors who are 13 and older aren't traumatized in the same way, and don't warrant the same protections as children 12 and under. As the State's Attorney for Prince George's County, how do I tell a victim who was sexually assaulted by a family member that their abuser only has to serve a quarter of their sentence before being eligible for parole because the abuse started two weeks after she turned 13 and not when she was 12? I do not believe that this is just or in fact justice for our minors?

Our minors deserve better, and sexual abuse of a minor should be considered a crime of violence. Thank you for your time and deliberation on this bill, and I urge a favorable report.

Thank you for your consideration.

  
Aisha N. Braveboy