



violence in Maryland

Working to end sexual

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Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 105
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
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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 105.

Senate Bill 105 – Senate Bill 105 establishes a mechanism in which employers may seek the civil protections of peace orders on behalf of their employees. The ability to obtain peace orders on behalf of employees, in certain circumstances, can be an effective tool for management in preventing workplace harassment, including sexual harassment.

Employers have a duty to provide their employees with a place of employment “free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious harm to . . . employees.” 29 U.S.C. § 654(a)(1). This includes workplace violence. By amending the current peace order statute to include employees in the definition of who is eligible for relief, employers will be able to take active steps to protect their staff, while preventing a respondent from retaliating against an individual employee who may have otherwise sought the protections. MCASA notes that a number of rape crisis programs and legal services programs have had abusers threaten employees and this bill would be a helpful response. MCASA also appreciates that employers are prohibited from retaliating against an employee who chooses not to cooperate with this type proceeding.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 105**