



Bill No: HB277
Title: Criminal Law – First Degree Child Abuse – Continuing Course of Conduct
Committee: Judiciary
Hearing: January 28, 2021
Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women’s groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW’s purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. **HB277 a priority on the 2021 MLAW Agenda and we urge your support.**

HB277 would make a continuing course of child abuse part of the first degree child abuse statute, it makes the continued course of action a crime of violence providing stiffer penalties that will better protect women and families.

Currently first degree child abuse requires death of the child or a serious physical injury which is defined as a brain injury, bleeding within the skull, substantial risk of death, disfigurement or the loss or impairment of a bodily organ. First degree child abuse does not cover children with numerous healing fractures, repeated abuse, some burns or other injuries often diagnosed by medical professionals as torture. Instead these repeated injuries can only be covered by 2nd child abuse which is not a crime of violence, maxes out at ten years which only requires a perpetrator to serve 1/4 of their sentence before they're eligible for parole. This puts a continued course of child abuse on par with misdemeanor second degree assault and does not provide the same needed protections to women and families.

For these reasons, MLAW strongly urges the passage of HB277.

MLAW's 2021 Agenda is supported by the following organizations:

AAUW Anne Arundel County
AAUW Easton Branch
AAUW Kensington Rockville Branch
AAUW Kensington-Rockville
American Association of University Women (AAUW) Maryland
Annapolis Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Anne Arundel County NOW
Baltimore County Alumnae Chapter or Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Baltimore Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Baltimore NOW (National Organization for Women)
Bound for Better, advocates for Domestic Violence
Business and Professional Women Maryland
Calvert County Commission for Women
Cambridge Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Charles County Commission for Women
Childway Early Learning Center
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Kappa Phi Chapter
For All Seasons, Inc.
Fort Washington Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Frederick County Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Inc
Harford County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Hug Don't Shoot
Human Trafficking Prevention Project, University of Baltimore School of Law
Kappa Psi Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
League of Women Voters of Prince George's County (LWVPGC)
Lee Law, LLC
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maryland Justice Project
Maryland NOW
Maryland Women's Heritage Center
Mission 50
MoCoWoMen
Montgomery County Commission for Women
Montgomery County MD Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club
Montgomery County Young Democrats
NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland
National Coalition of 100 Black Women., Inc. Anne Arundel County Chapter
National Coalition of 100 Black Women-Prince George's
North Arundel County Alumnae Chapter-Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Potomac Valley Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Prince George's County Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.
Reproductive Justice Inside
Stella's Girls Inc.
The Rest Of A Life (TROAL)
Top Ladies of Distinction
Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc.- Patuxent River Chapter
Top Ladies of Distinction, Prince George's County Chapter
UAW Local 1183
WISE
Women's Equality Day 2020 Celebration Coalition
Women's Law Center of Maryland
Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women
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