



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

P.O. Box 8782
Silver Spring, MD 20907
Phone: 301-565-2277
Fax: 301-565-3619

For more information contact:
Lisae C. Jordan, Esquire
443-995-5544
www.mcasa.org

Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 356
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, including for survivors of child sexual abuse. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence in the State of Maryland. We urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 356.

Senate Bill 356 – Restrictions on Expungement

This bill would prohibit expungement in cases where either:

- 1) the convicted offender was sentenced to be on the sex offender registry, or
- 2) an order of restitution against the convicted offender has not been satisfied.

Permitting an offender to expunge a record while on the sex offender registry is illogical, providing the public with information in one venue but restricting it in another. For cases where the offender is no longer on the registry, allowing expungement would deprive courts of important information, including in family law matters. (MCASA would not oppose shielding in these cases.)

Regarding expungement of cases where there is an unsatisfied judgement of restitution, MCASA appreciates the challenges facing low income defendants who have otherwise met their obligations to society, however, restitution is important to crime victims. We respectfully suggest that any changes to restitution orders – particularly a change that effectively vacates the order – should go through the process to modify sentences and include notice to the victim.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on
Senate Bill 356**