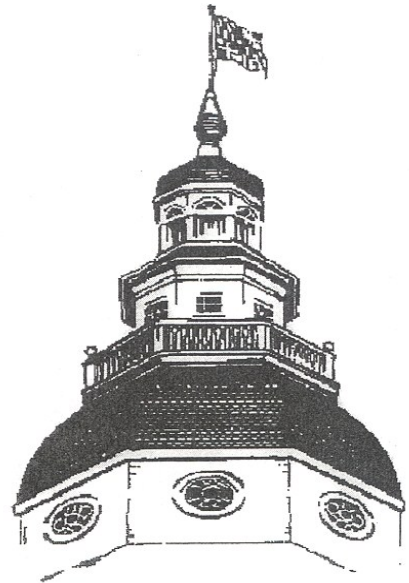


Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women *2013*



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE
2013 MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR WOMEN
CONTACT:

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Overview

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. The coalition advocates for progressive legislation and policies that promote and protect the well-being of Maryland women and their families and provide them opportunities to develop their full potential.

This initiative is a response to the Maryland Commission for Women's decision in August of 2004 to absorb the Legislative Agenda for Maryland Women (LAMW) into its Legislative and Public Policy Committee. For twelve years, the Legislative Agenda for Maryland Women, a statewide coalition effort, supported successful passage of dozens of bills that have improved the quality of life for Maryland's women and families. Many leaders of the new initiative served on the LAMW steering committee.

Our Vision

Maryland women and their families have a right, by law, to an adequate and sustainable quality of life and an opportunity to develop their full potential.

Guiding Principles

- An adequate standard of living regardless of ability to work or achieve financial independence
- Personal safety at home, school and the workplace
- Freedom from discrimination in Maryland's economic, educational, judicial, political, and social system
- Equal access to quality health care and reproductive services
- Safe and affordable child and dependent care
- A quality, public education
- Equitable and responsible implementation and enforcement of rights and protections provided by existing law
- Elimination of discriminatory policies and practices based on age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities and attributes, race, and sexual orientation
- Family-friendly employment practices

Board of Directors

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2013 Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

SUPPORTERS

Organizations

Anne Arundel County Commission for Women	Family Crisis Resource Center, Inc.
Anne Arundel County NOW	Jobs Opportunities Task Force
AAUW, Easton Branch	Maryland Business and Professional Women
AAUW, Howard County	Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
AAUW, Kensington-Rockville Branch	Maryland Commission for Women
AAUW, Patuxent River Branch	Maryland NOW
AAUW, Silver Spring Branch	Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Rho Xi Omega Chapter	Montgomery County Commission for Women
Baltimore NOW	Southern Prince George's County Business & Professional Women
Calvert County Commission for Women	Talbot County Democratic Forum
Cecil County, Domestic Violence Rape Crisis Center	Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc.
Domestic Violence Center of Howard County	Zonta Club of Charles County
Family & Children's Services	

Individuals

Jan Arado	Eleanor Dayhoff-	Elizabeth Joyce	Rita Reimer	Jo Stolworthy
Suzanne Bailey	Brannigan	Sarah Kaiser	Anita Riley	Anita Taylor
Karen Bailor	Phyllis Dell	Tovah Kasdin	Ginger Robinson	Linda Tebbs
Kathryn Barakat	Paula Dozier	Mary Keating	Rita Robinson	Kathleen Nieberding
Kristen Beath	Laurie Duker	Jennifer Kim	Diane Roca	Temprine
Sandi C. Becker	Susan Elgin	Dr. Stephanie Knarr	Katharine M. Rogers	Carmen Delgado
Sandra Neiman	Jane Escher	Mettah Kollmann	Jane Ross	Votaw
Becker	Linda Dean Fihelly	Lois Krum	Laurence Ruth	Kay Wendowski
Sandy Bell	Lynn R. Fitrell	Mary Elizabeth	Judy Santo	April White
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Elizabeth Bobob	Elaine Franz	N. Sharon	Suzanne R.	Marie Foley White
Erin Boquski	Cassandra Rone	Leatherman	Schlattman	Phyllis T. White
Judy Bottorf	Freeman	Laura LeBlanc	Barbara A.	Caren Williams
Johanna Brewer	David I. Gale	Annabel Leshner	Schnackenberg	Diane Williams
Melissa Broome	Maria Gomez	Dr. Joan Leukhardt	Joan Schwartz	Susan Williams
L. Tracy Brown	Betsy Grater	Vivian Levi	Sheila Scott	Elaine Wilson
Rebecca Caldwell	Jill Moss Greenberg	Nancy Lewis	Bobbie Seabolt	Dr. Willie Woods
Karen Callahan	Eleanor Hairston	Cynthia Lifson	Connie Sgarlata	Valerie A. Young
Robert Carlozzi	Janet Harford	Emily R. Lipsitz	Reena K. Shah	Kati Zang
Dr. Jean Carlson	Barbara Hargroves	Linda Mahoney	Virginia Shaw	Ruth Zlotowitz
Dr. Sharron	Sue Hecht	Ruth Manchester	Eunice Shearer	
Cassavant	Dr. Priscilla Hilliard	Eileen Menton	Barbara Shepp, MSW	
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Michael Cohen	Deborah L. Horan	Sen. Karen S.	Deborah Smith	
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Pat Cornish	Hussain	Jessica Morgan	Suzanne Smith	
Elsie R. Conway	Sharon R. Jacob	Karalyn Mulligan	Ted Sober	
Patricia Crane	Prof. Margaret E.	Minnie Nichols	Tracy L. Steedman	
Sandra Daniels	Johnson	Anna Ossler	Susan Steele	
Greta T. Davis	Ann M. Jordan	Kelly Powers	LaVanna Stevenson	
	Denise M. Joseph	Beverly A. Reddy	Joan Stine	

The names of individuals and organizational supporters that may only support some components of the agenda that pertain to their mission and work.

2013 Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

Agenda Process and Selection

In October, MLAW hosted its Fall Agenda Conference. Advocacy and women's groups were invited to present legislative initiatives for consideration. The criteria for initiatives to be presented at the Conference were:

- Must address a women's issue
- Must be able to be addressed through the legislative process
- Must have an identifiable, sustainable lead group that agrees to shepherd the legislation
- Must have a sponsor
- Must have a reasonable expectation of success

Following a successful conference, the Board of Directors met to review the legislation and ensure that it met the criteria. Bills that met the criteria were placed on a ballot, which was distributed to the MLAW membership. Members were asked to vote for the initiatives that would comprise the **2013 Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women**.

2013 Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

Issues and Initiatives

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Asset Forfeiture for Human Trafficking and Related Crimes

Bill Number: TBD

Synopsis:

The court, in imposing a sentence on a person convicted of an offense in violation of Maryland's human trafficking laws shall order, in addition to any other penalty or disposition authorized or required by law, that the person forfeit to the state any real or personal property used to commit such offense or derived from it.

Committee(s): House Judiciary

Lead Sponsor(s): Delegate Kathleen Dumais, 410-841-3052

Lead Group(s): Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force
Nancy Winston, Chair, Legislative Committee 443 994-7607

Background Information:

Sex trafficking is a form of human trafficking defined as the commercial sexual exploitation of an adult by force, fraud or coercion. If the victim is under 18 years of age, the child is by definition a victim of sex trafficking without the need to prove force, fraud or coercion. In Maryland, as in all states, our children are being lured or forced into the commercial sex industry. The average age nationally is 13 years old. These children become trauma-bonded to their pimps, and their forced behavior causes them to be seen as criminals; thus they are regularly sentenced to juvenile detention for the crime committed against them while their traffickers suffer no significant consequences.

Assets gained by convicted pimps and traffickers from the forced servitude of their victims should be seized and utilized to fund services for those victims. There is no other government funding, either state or federal, for restorative services for this marginalized population. The proposed legislation would establish an Anti-Human Trafficking fund that would be utilized for victim services and for costly law enforcement investigations.

The 2013 bill has been re-crafted from previous attempts in order to address concerns expressed by members of the Judiciary Committee regarding due process and innocent owner provisions, and is modeled on federal asset forfeiture laws and well as those of other states. Thirty one states have asset forfeiture laws for various crimes of commercial sexual exploitation of children and 22 of these provide for asset forfeiture specifically in cases of human trafficking.

Child Abuse and Neglect –Notice and Reporting Requirements, Disclosure and Task Force

Bill Number: SB 94

Synopsis:

This Bill would incentivize mandatory reporters of child abuse to comply with Maryland law by imposing statutory sanctions when mandatory reporters knowingly and willfully fail to report sexual abuse of a child.

Committee(s): Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Lead Sponsor: Senator Delores G. Kelley

Lead Group: Tenth District Democratic Club
Charles E. Sydnor, III
410-747-5556

Background Information:

The Bill is a reintroduction of Senate Bill 163 from the 2012 Session, which was amended in the Judicial Proceedings Committee, passed the Senate, but never received a hearing in the House.

The Bill would incentivize mandatory reporters of child abuse to comply with Maryland law, by imposing statutory sanctions, as do 47 states and the District of Columbia, when mandatory reporters fail to report any of the following forms of abuse of a child: Rape in the first degree, Rape in the second degree, a sexual offense in the first degree, a sexual offense in the second degree and Incest.

In addition, the bill would require the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to send an autopsy report to the certain officials if the office finds that the death of a child was caused by child abuse or neglect.

If a mandatory reporter knowingly and willfully fails to file a report as required by Section 5-704 of the Family Law Article when the following circumstances pertain, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction, is subject to imprisonment not exceeding one year or a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or both.

This Bill also provides for a task force to study training needs for school employees and volunteers on the Prevention, Identification and Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse.

Earned Sick and Safe Time Act

Bill Number: TBD

Synopsis: The proposed legislation would allow Maryland workers the opportunity to earn a limited number of annual paid sick days from their employer, based on the number of hours they work.

Committees: House Economic Matters & Senate Finance

Lead Sponsor: Delegate John Olszewski

Lead Group: Job Opportunities Task Force / Working Matters Coalition
Melissa Broome, Senior Policy Advocate
(410) 234-8046
(410) 236-6079 cell
melissa@jotf.org

Background Information:

Everyone gets sick and everyone deserves time to recover without risking their economic stability, yet 41% of American workers are unable to earn paid sick days. Here in Maryland, more than 700,000 of our neighbors are forced to make impossible choices: Go to work sick, send an ill child to school or daycare, or stay home and sacrifice much-needed income or, worse, risk job loss. When looking specifically at low-wage earners – the people who can least afford to take unpaid time off from work when sick – that number jumps to 80%.

This issue has an especially severe impact on women. Working women are more likely to have significant caregiving responsibilities – including caring for elderly parents, children or ill spouses/partners – yet women-dominated industries are among the least likely to offer paid sick days. Without this basic workplace benefit, women are often left with no choice but to forego pay in order to meet their families' health care needs.

Our laws need to be updated to reflect the reality of today's families. Nearly two-thirds of mothers work outside the home, and women's earnings make up a substantial share of family income. Half of working mothers miss work when their child gets sick. Of these mothers, half do not get paid when they take this time off. Among low-income working mothers, two in three report losing pay. **Working women need a basic workplace standard of paid sick days so they don't have to choose between keeping their job and caring for a sick child or family member.**

The Earned Sick and Safe Time Act requires Maryland employers to allow workers to earn a limited number of annual paid sick and safe days. The "safe time" component of the legislation requires employers to allow victims of domestic abuse or sexual assault to use their accrued paid sick leave to care for their health after these incidents or to seek legal protections or new housing.

Crimes – Committing a Crime of Violence in the Presence of a Minor

Bill Number: TBD; previously introduced in 2012 as HB 664

Synopsis of the bill:

This bill enhances the penalty for persons who commit a crime of violence when such persons know or should reasonably have known that a minor is within sight or hearing of the crime of violence. This enhanced penalty affects only those defendants who have been convicted of a crime of violence.

Committees: House Judiciary and Senate Judicial Proceedings

Lead Sponsor: Del. Luiz Simmons (based on previous introduction in 2012); 410-841-3037

Lead Groups: Office of the Attorney General; Maryland Association of States' Attorneys; Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence

Lead Group: Cynthia Lifson or Michael Cohen, 410-531-1619 or 301-429-3601

Background Information:

Children who are exposed to domestic violence in their homes are at greater risk for becoming abusers or victims as adults. Children watch their parents and learn from them. They may grow up to believe that this is a normal way for intimate partners to behave. They may be fearful, anxious, and may act out through withdrawal or aggressive behavior and display a myriad of behavioral problems such as depression, attempted suicide, alcohol or substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, teen pregnancy, school learning problems, bullying or harassment, or criminal acts. Research such as the ACE study has also demonstrated that they can suffer adverse health effects.

Crimes of violence are specifically defined in the Maryland Code and generally refer to interpersonal violence. In this proposed legislation, if a person commits a crime of violence within the sight or hearing of a minor in a residence (and the residence is where many incidents of domestic violence occur), there are at least two victims of the crime of violence, the actual target and the child who has been exposed to the crime. The generational cycle of domestic violence is perpetuated.

The proposed legislation (previously introduced in the 2012 session as HB 664) states that if a person is convicted of committing a crime of violence when the person should know or reasonably have known that that a minor is present in the residence, if *convicted* of a crime of violence with these additional circumstances, this person shall be subject to an *enhanced penalty* that shall be separate from and consecutive to a sentence for any crime of violence that had been committed. In addition, the proposed legislation states that a person who commits a crime of violence when a minor is present in the residence is guilty of child abuse.

We believe that the proposed legislation is a meaningful step to work toward breaking the generational cycle of domestic violence by addressing the impact of domestic violence on children.

Akin's Law

Bill Number: TBD

Synopsis: A bill to terminate the parental rights of rapists when a child is conceived as a result of rape.

Committees: House Judiciary/Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Legislative Sponsor(s): Senator Jamie Raskin, 301-858-3634
Delegate Kathleen Dumais, 301-858-3052

Lead Group: Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Lisae C. Jordan, General Counsel
443-995-5544

Background Information:

Sexual assault continues to disproportionately impact women. Any estimate of the incidence of sexual assault is just that – an estimate – rape, child sexual abuse, and other sexual offenses continues to be one of the most underreported crimes in America. However, we do know that one out of every 8 adult women, or about 260,000 adult women in Maryland, has been the victim of forcible rape sometime in her lifetime. Ruggiero, K.J. & Kilpatrick, D. G. (2003), Rape in Maryland: A Report to the State. Charleston, SC: National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center, Medical University of South Carolina.

In August 2012, Congressman Todd Akin suggested that women did not become pregnant as a result of “legitimate rape” and that pregnancy from rape is a rare occurrence. In fact, a longitudinal study of rape-related pregnancy in the U.S., published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology (1996, vol. 175, pp. 320-325), found that 5% of rape victims of reproductive age (age 12-45) became pregnant as a result of rape, with the majority of pregnancies in adolescents.

Akin's Law would give rape victims a process to terminate parental rights of rapists when a child is conceived as result of rape. Victims would be required to meet a clear and convincing standard of evidence. This is the same standard used for other termination of parental rights cases – no higher, no lower.

Protective Orders – Relief for Victims of Dating and Sexual Violence

Bill Number: TBD

Synopsis: A bill to allow victims of dating and sexual violence to seek protective orders.

Committees: House Judiciary/Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Legislative Sponsor(s): Senator Chris Shank and Delegate Kathleen M. Dumais

Lead Group: Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
443-995-5544

Background Information:

Protective Orders and Peace Orders are civil orders to protect individuals against future violence and harassment. This bill would move dating violence and sexual assault out of the Peace Order statute and into the Protective Order statute. This will provide these victim/survivors with heightened protection and a better systemic response.

This bill responds to a murder and an assault, but also addresses a systemic gap in protection for victims. Heather Harris was shot to death by her former boyfriend, Randy Houston McPeak in June 2011. Cherie Sue Myers's former boyfriend attacked and threatened to kill her in August 2011. Both of the victims in these cases had Peace Orders against their assailants. The Washington County Deputy State's Attorney and local sheriff lamented the fact that the victims in these cases had peace orders, not protective orders. They pointed out that law enforcement is automatically notified when a protective order is issued, but not when a peace order is, and that there are special programs available in response to protective orders. These systemic responses help protect Marylanders and prevent future violence.

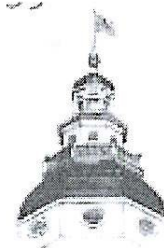
A 2009 survey of states found that 41 other states currently include dating violence in their protective order statutes. ABA Commission on Domestic Violence (2009). Virginia recently joined this group in response to the Yearley Love murder. These states recognize that protective orders can help save lives in highly emotional and volatile cases.

Peace orders are simply not viewed with the same degree of seriousness as protective orders. Dating violence and sexual assault are volatile cases that need the special attention that a protective order produces. Rather than waste resources by expanding programs to all peace order cases, Maryland should simply move the cases that need a more serious response to the protective order statute. This will efficiently and effectively protect the people who need it.

Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

2012-2013 Membership Form

MLAW's membership year is July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013



I Want to Make a Difference!

I Want to be an MLAW Member

Type of Membership (*check only one*):

- \$35 - Individual
- \$70 - Organization income under \$25,000
- \$100 - Organization income over \$25,000

If you are joining as both an individual and an organization, please complete a separate form for EACH membership.

I Want to Increase MLAW's Collective Voice by Making an Additional Donation

• \$1,000 • \$750 • \$500 • \$250 • \$100 • \$75 • \$50 • \$25 Other _____

Payment:

- A check for \$_____, made payable to MLAW, is enclosed.

Individual or Organization: _____

Please spell out organization name. No acronyms.

Contact Name (*for organizations only*) _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

IMPORTANT! Please include an email address. Most of the business of MLAW will be conducted via email through the MLAW Yahooogroup. If you are not already on the Yahooogroup, you will receive an email invitation to join the group.

Mail this completed form to:
MLAW
305 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 201
Towson, MD 21204

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Maryland Women (MLAW) is a 501(c)4 organization. Because we engage in legislative advocacy, contributions to MLAW are not tax-deductible.

Demonstrate Your Womanpower with MLAW

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO TAKE ACTION ON LEGISLATION

MLAW (Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women) is a statewide group of organizations and individuals working to provide an independent, non-partisan voice advocating for critical legislation and policies affecting women and their families. Visit our website at www.mdlegagendaforwomen.org for more information.

Here are a few steps you can take to stay informed about legislation you care about and to let your legislators know your position.



SIGN UP FOR MLAW'S YAHOO LIST SERVE to receive information, updates, alerts, and other information of interest.



LEARN MORE about the issues you care about.



CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS during the session:

- ★ Call, write, e-mail, fax or visit legislators to express your support or opposition to legislation. You can find who your state legislators are, their contact information, copies of bills, hearing schedules and more at <http://mlis.state.md.us>.
- ★ Contact the lead group or groups to find out more about what you can do to support or oppose legislative proposals or other issues.
- ★ Attend a legislative hearing and be a visible supporter.
- ★ Submit written or give oral testimony.
- ★ Find out how your legislators voted – and hold them accountable – by letters or by your next opportunity to vote for them.



SPREAD THE WORD – promote the MLAW Agenda and other issues to friends and colleagues and encourage them to take action.



MAINTAIN FOCUS on key areas: health care, reproductive rights, economics, family law, domestic and sexual violence.



JOIN MLAW to support an independent voice for women's and family issues.



PARTICIPATE – and build women's collective power.

Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

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