



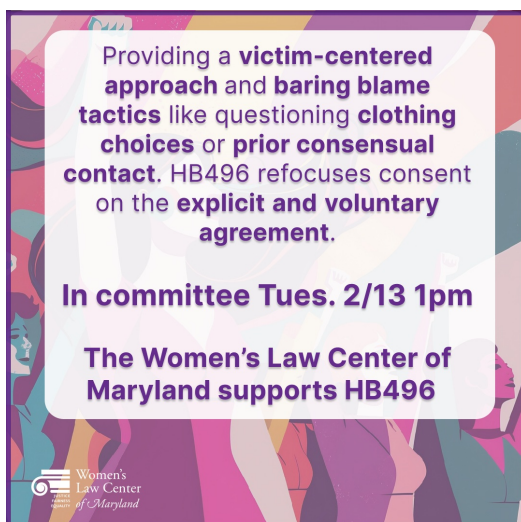
# Women's Law Center of Maryland

***Celebrating 53 Years of Advancing Justice***

**A Busy Week in Annapolis!**

***Check out some incredible bills being heard  
this week to make a difference for Maryland  
women!***

***Tuesday February 13th:***



## **HB496 Criminal Law- Sexual Crimes- Consent and Second-Degree Rape**

removes antiquated force and threat of force standards, shifting the focus to an explicit and voluntary agreement and providing survivors with a victim-centered approach. **HB496** bars the fact finder from utilizing blame tactics such as questioning the victim's clothing choices and if they had prior consensual sexual contact with the perpetrator, providing a straightforward approach to prosecuting and determining sex crime cases.

**HB496 will be heard on Tuesday, 2/13, at 1 pm!**

**Click below to email members of the Judiciary Committee and ask  
for a favorable vote.**

**Email Judiciary Committee Members to support HB496**

## **SB327 Family Law- Child Custody Determinations**

prioritizes the best interest of the child standard while streamlining child custody determinations, benefiting self-represented litigants, and safeguarding against potential harm, especially in cases of domestic violence. In contrast, **SB0663** proposes a rebuttable presumption of

joint custody, potentially prioritizing parental rights over child welfare. **The Women's Law Center strongly opposes SB663** as it risks undermining the established standards for custody decisions and neglecting the safety and stability crucial for children's well-being.

Streamlining child custody determinations while maintaining the **cornerstone standard- the best interest of the child**- while safeguarding against potential harm, especially in cases of domestic violence.

**In committee Tues. 2/13 1pm**

**The Women's Law Center of Maryland supports SB327**



**SB327 will be heard on Tuesday, 2/13, at 1 pm!**

**Click below to email members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee and ask for a favorable vote AND strongly oppose SB663 as it does not maintain the best interests of the child.**

**Email Judicial Proceedings Committee Members:SUPPORT SB327 and OPPOSE SB663**

**Expanding the prosecution window** recognizes the **challenges victims face** in identifying and addressing digital crimes and **strengthens protections against digital abuse.**

**In committee Tues. 2/13 1pm**

**The Women's Law Center of Maryland supports HB544.**



**HB544 Criminal Law- Sexual Extortion, Stalking, and Revenge Porn- Statute of Limitations and In Bank Review**

Expands the time to prosecute stalking, sextortion, and revenge porn by eliminating the statute of limitations, reflecting the evolving nature of technology-based crimes. WLC supports HB544; understanding victims' challenges, recognizing and addressing these crimes, and extending the prosecution window is crucial for delivering justice and protecting individuals from lasting harm. HB544 strengthens protections against

digital abuse.

**HB544 will be heard on Tuesday, 2/13, at 1 pm!**

**Click below to email members of the Judiciary Committee and ask for a favorable vote.**

**Email Judiciary Committee members to support HB544**

**HB555 Criminal Law-**

## Unauthorized Dissemination of Personal Identifying Information - Prohibition

prohibits the unauthorized dissemination of personal identifying information (AKA doxxing) to intimidate, harass, or abuse individuals. This behavior, often motivated by revenge or jealousy, is particularly prevalent in cases of intimate partner violence, where abusers seek to embarrass or exploit their victims. The psychological impact of doxxing, including anxiety, depression, and PTSD, can be severe and long-lasting.

Particularly **prevalent** in cases of **intimate partner violence**, **doxxing** is commonly used to **intimidate, harass, or abuse**, often causing **severe and long lasting harm** like **anxiety, depression, and PTSD**.

**In committee Tues. 2/13 1pm**

**The Women's Law Center of Maryland supports HB555.**



**HB555 will be heard on Tuesday, 2/13, at 1 pm!**  
**Click below to email members of the Judiciary Committee and ask for a favorable vote.**

**Email Judiciary Committee members to support HB555**

## ***Wednesday February 14th:***

**Mandating 24-hour access to OTC contraception** on community college campuses ensures **students** can maintain **bodily autonomy** with **convenience** and **privacy**, promoting **educational equity** and **empowering** traditionally **marginalized communities**.

**In committee Wed. 2/14 1pm**

**The Women's Law Center of Maryland supports SB527.**



## **SB527 Community Colleges- Contraception- Access**

**Requirements** mandates 24-hour access to over-the-counter contraception on community college campuses, addressing significant barriers students face in accessing reproductive healthcare off campus, which can hinder their educational success and perpetuate systemic inequality. **SB527** promotes educational equity and empowers marginalized communities.

**SB527 will be heard on Wednesday, 2/14, at 1 pm!**  
**Click below to email members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee and ask for a favorable vote.**

**Email Education, Energy, and Environment Committee Members to support SB527**

## ***Thursday February 15th:***

**SB119 Legally Protected Health Care- Gender Affirming Treatment** is a crucial step towards addressing inequitable health disparities faced by transwomen, ensuring meaningful access to gender-affirming treatment for over 20,000 transgender Marylanders. Our feminism must be intersectional to succeed, recognizing that transgender women face barriers to physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy. In healthcare, discrimination against marginalized communities persists, with transgender individuals bearing a disproportionate burden.

**Intersectional feminism is essential.** Advancing justice for women always **includes trans women.** SB119 ensures **meaningful access to gender-affirming treatment** for over **20,000 transgender Marylanders.**

**In committee Thurs. 2/15  
1pm**

**The Women's Law Center of  
Maryland supports SB119.**



**SB119 will be heard Thursday, 2/15, at 1 pm!**  
**Click below to email members of the Finance Committee and ask for a favorable vote.**

**Email Finance Committee Members to support SB119**

We will provide updates on these bills and others we are working on as session progresses. In the meantime, don't forget to let [your legislators](#) know about what issues matter most to you!

Onward together,

***Katie Curran O'Malley***  
Executive Director

P.S. As always, if you appreciate the work we do, whether in the General Assembly or through our [direct legal services](#) across the State, [give here!](#) And if this email was forwarded to you by a friend, make sure to sign up for our legislative alerts [here!](#)

**P.P.S. If you're interested in getting even more information related to the state of reproductive rights, and the legislative package seeking to support abortion care in Maryland, follow the Marylanders for Reproductive Choice coalition, of which the WLC is a member of the steering committee! MRC is on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#): [@mdreprochoice!](#)**

**P.P.P.S. Save the Date for the WLC's Annual Celebration and Awards Ceremony on May 7th at 6pm at Citron!**

Have an event you'd like to share with us? Send us an [email](#)!

### About The Women's Law Center of Maryland

The vision of the Women's Law Center of Maryland is a legal system that provides justice and fairness for women. The Women's Law Center's mission is to ensure the physical safety, economic security, and autonomy of women throughout the State. We work towards this goal by providing direct legal representation, information and referral services, and legislative advocacy.

**Our efforts to promote justice, fairness, and equality for women are only possible because of friends like you.**

Give Today

*The Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. is a charitable organization designated as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3). A copy of our financial statement is available upon request. Documents and information submitted under the State of Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State of Maryland, Annapolis, MD 21401 for the cost of copying and postage.*



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