

MUSTER: Urge your State Senator to vote for SB 138 – Criminal Procedure – Sentencing-- Domestic Violence as a Mitigating Factor (Providing Alternatives Through Healing for Justice-Involved Individuals (PATH Act)

Dear MAJR Supporter:

On Tuesday, January 27, 2026, the Judicial Proceedings Committee will hold a hearing on the [PATH Act](#). You have been selected to take action because your senator is a member of that committee. Please urge your senator to vote favorably on this bill.

Individuals with histories of domestic violence and abuse are overrepresented among our prison population in Maryland. It is estimated that up to 85% of women behind bars are survivors of domestic abuse. But these experiences are not unique to women – men, transgender, and nonbinary individuals also suffer domestic abuse. Very often, this abuse was a significant contributing factor to the commission of the offense for which many find themselves incarcerated. This bill would allow criminalized survivors the opportunity to introduce mitigation evidence of their abuse at critical steps in the criminal legal process.

The bill expands the definition of domestic violence beyond physical violence, since physical violence is only one tool that perpetrators use to gain greater power over others. Many individuals share stories of being subjected to ongoing, carefully orchestrated stages of power and control that include isolation, economic abuse using threats and coercion, intimidation, emotional abuse, and having their perpetrator minimize or deny that such abuse even took place. Because these acts of abuse are often underreported, the bill broadens who may introduce evidence to include family, friends, medical professionals, counselors, advocates, and social workers.

Maryland Courts must create greater opportunities for criminalized survivors to be heard, recognized, and valued as they progress through the various stages of our criminal legal system. For all these reasons, the [Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform](#) (MAJR) asks that you urge your Senator to vote for SB 138.

To Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

Subject: Support SB 138 – Criminal Procedure – Sentencing- Domestic Violence as a Mitigating Factor (Providing Alternatives Through Healing for Justice-Involved Individuals (PATH Act)

As your constituent, I write to ask you to vote for SB 138, which is scheduled for a hearing on Tuesday, January 27, 2026. This bill will help lift the voices of victims of domestic violence.

Individuals with histories of domestic violence and abuse are overrepresented among our prison population in Maryland. It is estimated that up to 85% of women behind bars are survivors of domestic abuse. But these experiences are not unique to women – men, transgender, and nonbinary individuals also suffer domestic abuse. Very often, this abuse was a significant contributing factor to the commission of the offense for which many find themselves incarcerated. This bill would allow criminalized survivors the opportunity to introduce mitigation evidence of their abuse at critical steps in the criminal legal process.

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Maryland Courts must foster greater opportunities for criminalized survivors to be heard, recognized, and valued as they progress through the various stages of our criminal legal system. As your constituent and as a supporter of the Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR), I urge you to vote favorably for SB 138.