



Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence

Legislative Update

FROM: Cynthia Lifson, Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence

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On Monday, March 31, three of the four MNADV legislative priorities for 2014 passed both chambers of the General Assembly. Specifically, the following bills completed their final journey in the Senate:

HB 307 ■ *Peace Orders and Protective Orders – Burden of Proof*

HB 309 ■ *Family Law – Domestic Violence – Permanent Final Protective Orders*

HB 647 ■ *Peace Orders and Protective Orders – Extensions*

We know now, without question, that these important initiatives are headed for Governor O'Malley's desk for his signature.

We are waiting for the results of some other bills that are currently pending in the General Assembly. We hope that some of the additional legislative proposals that will help those dealing with domestic violence will also pass through both chambers and also be signed by the Governor. Naturally, we will be actively monitoring these items and reporting the results to you at the conclusion of the 2014 session.

We at the MNADV have many people to thank for these positive results, including many members of Maryland's executive and legislative branches of government. We will be recognizing and thanking all our leaders as well as our many coalition partners after the end of the session.

For now, however, we extend a special thank you to Senator Brian Frosh, Chairman of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, who re-initiated the conversation in the fall of 2013 to change the burden of proof for peace orders and protective orders from the standard of "clear and convincing" to "preponderance of the evidence." We have been advocating for this change in the law since the mid-1990s. Senator Frosh's leadership on this bill enabled this foundational change in our law to occur. Sincere thanks to Senator Frosh for his encouragement and his leadership in getting the job done. Bravo!