

Maryland Jewish Advocacy DAY 2022



Safe Access to Interim and Temporary Protective Orders

A protective order can be a lifesaving tool for someone facing abuse. These orders are issued by a judge or commissioner to protect domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault victims and vulnerable older adults. They are intended to protect victims by prohibiting their abuser from contacting them. Currently those seeking protective orders are required to go to a judge or commissioner to petition for a protective order.

Senate Bill 280 / House Bill 296 (SB280/HB296) Interim and Temporary Protective Orders – Electronic Filing and Video Conferencing Hearings (Senator Shelly Hettleman / Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield) Senate Judicial Proceedings and House Judiciary Committees

This bill seeks to expand access to safety through the courts. It would enable petitioners eligible for protective orders who are seeking medical treatment in a hospital setting to petition for an interim or temporary protective order while still at that healthcare setting and to have the hearing conducting remotely.

Why is this bill good for Maryland and the Jewish Community?

Each year in Maryland an average of 85,000 temporary protective orders are filed in state courts. Behind every one of these is a victim afraid for his or her safety. This bill would allow victims of abuse who are eligible to request interim and/or temporary protective orders to do so in a hospital setting. Currently, if a victim is in a facility due to a violent incident, they cannot leave the hospital protected from their abuser. Further, victims who are in a hospital setting for other medical reasons and feel safe disclosing their abuse to their trusted medical professional, cannot receive a protective order in that facility before leaving.

Many hospitals have programs to treat victims of abuse, making healthcare settings ideal locations for a virtual hearing. Due to the pandemic, many court proceedings have already been held virtually for almost two years. This measure would ensure that this becomes an option for all abuse victims seeking a protective order.

What Can Be Done?

Ask your legislators to support this bill. Share why it is important for all abuse victims to have this option when seeking a protective order.