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## TAP Report Comments

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**Elizabeth Ward Saxl** <director@mecasa.org>

Wed, Dec 13, 2017 at 11:14 AM

To: "matt.pollack@courts.maine.gov" <matt.pollack@courts.maine.gov>

Matt – I am writing on behalf of the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Maine's sexual assault support centers, including the Immigrant Resource Center of Maine, in response to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court invitation to comment on the recommendations presented to the Court in the Report of the Task Force on Transparency and Privacy in Court Records.

The Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault is organized to end sexual violence in Maine and to support high quality sexual violence prevention and response within Maine communities. We works toward ending sexual violence through: initiating and advocating for victim-centered public policy; providing expert training, technical assistance, and resources for providers and partners; funding sexual assault

There are numerous barriers to the successful prosecution of sexual assault cases as well as for victims seeking civil protections. There can be shame and there is often the interest in keeping the intimate nature of these crimes out of the public eye and sometimes there are safety concerns. In addition, we often face the issue of witnesses who are reluctant to "get involved." It is those issues as well as others that we must consider as we try to find the line between transparency/the public's right to know and the privacy of victims.

We would like to reiterate our support of the Report of the Task Force on Transparency and Privacy in Court Records and draw you attention to our additional comments which appear in appendix 5(b) of the same.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth Ward Saxl, Executive Director

Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault

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*(she, her, hers)*

*Statewide Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Line: [1-800-871-7741](tel:1-800-871-7741)*