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Offit Kurman Attorneys Mark Dimenna and Sarah Sawyer Author Article on Maryland's Anti-SLAPP Statute for Maryland Bar Journal

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Offit Kurman attorneys Mark Dimenna and Sarah Sawyer recently published "Does Maryland's Anti-SLAPP Statute Achieve Its Intended Purpose?" in the Maryland Bar Journal. The article discusses the second successful invocation of Maryland's Anti-SLAPP Statute since its enactment in 2004. An anti-SLAPP law is designed to protect individuals from Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP), which aim to silence or intimidate critics exercising rights to speech by burdening them with the costs of a legal defense. Dimenna and Sawyer explore the Statute's effectiveness in the tumultuous defamation cases leading up to this significant ruling.

Courtney Fix, owner of Full Circle Donuts in Baltimore, Maryland, faced three defamation lawsuits after posting warnings on Instagram about abusive men in the Baltimore area. Her posts sparked both support and backlash, with individuals targeting her business and online presence. In her defense, Courtney relied on Maryland's Anti-SLAPP Statute and Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, emphasizing that her comments were not verifiable facts and were instead opinions about matters of public concern.

The court ruled in Courtney's favor, dismissing the case and marking one of the rare successes under the state's Anti-SLAPP law. Despite the legal victory, Courtney's life and business suffered significantly. The lawsuits took a toll on her, leading her to close her business and leave Baltimore.

While the ruling set a positive precedent for others facing SLAPP suits, it underscored the limitations of Maryland's Anti-SLAPP Statute, particularly its lack of an attorneys' fee provision, which left Courtney burdened by legal costs. Her case raises questions about whether the statute provides enough protection for those targeted by retaliatory litigation.

To read more about the case details and Dimenna and Sawyer's analysis, click [here](#).

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