

February 19, 2020

Senator Pamela Beidle  
Maryland Senate Finance Committee  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Opposition to MD S 411

Dear Senator Beidle

My name is Suzy Mallick and I am the manager of Hampshire Pawnbrokers as a Pawnbroker in Montgomery Co. which borders PG Co. I am very concerned that this bill will harm myself, our Employees as well as local community and our state. **The bills' one-size-fits-all requirement would force pawn shops to close, killing an industry that is a stable safety-net that our customers rely on in their time of need. Our customers do not have access to traditional banking lines of credit.** Our pawn transactions are not based on a customer's credit or income level. They are non-recourse transactions, based solely on the value of the personal property the customer brings in exchange for cash. **No one will check the customer's credit and they will never be sent to collections or forced into bankruptcy for failure to pay.** Almost 10% of US households have used pawn shops. The average pawn transaction in the U.S. is **less than \$150, the majority being under \$75**, and almost 85% of customers pay off their loans and redeem their collateral. Maryland pawnbrokers are highly regulated and licensed at the state or local level and typically report all transactions to law enforcement within 24 hours. Pawnbroker charges are competitive, market-driven, and transparent with no hidden fees and are usually less than many "late payment charges" charged by utility companies, landlords, banks, or credit-card companies. And pawn shops are green, environmentally-sustainable businesses – they are the largest sellers of recycled goods in the country.

My concerns if this passes, will be whether our company will be able to sustain our nine employees and our customers who depend on us being here for them -we have been a part of the Hillandale Community in Montgomery Co on the border of PG Co. MD for 25 years. We have a long working relationship with our local Montgomery Co Pawn unit as well. Please take into consideration, the cost of running our business has inflated every year from Rent, utilities, to health care costs etc. We have not raised our interest rates in the 18 years since I have been the manager here. We do not charge late fees. Even at times when we struggle to pay salaries and benefits. Our Assistant manager of 17 years is a single mother she rents in Mont. Co., raising her 17 year old son and her older handicapped son. Our next associate has been with us 8 years and is expecting her first child, and recently purchased a home in PG Co. she will continue to work after the birth. Our next associate has been with us 6 years, he lives in Mont. Co. raising his family. I wanted to put a face on some of our employees who depend on their salaries Our customers are hardworking people who do not want a handout to pay a bill, or to cover emergency room charges or urgent vehicle repairs. They rely on our neighborhood pawn shops for the money to pay those expenses. I ask you to stop this harmful bill before it eliminates the availability of well-regulated, non-recourse credit sources that consumers depend on. **Thank you for your help with this urgent matter.**

Sincerely Suzy Mallick - Manager of Hampshire Pawnbrokers  
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