



**MARYLAND CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION  
MARYLAND SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION**



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr. Chairman and  
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Chief David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee  
Sheriff Darren Popkin, Co-Chair, MSA, Joint Legislative Committee  
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

**DATE:** January 14, 2020

**RE:** **SB 35 - Criminal Law – Crime of Violence - Definition**

**POSITION:** **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT** SB 35. This bill establishes the use of a firearm in the commission of a felony with the intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance as a crime of violence. Under current law, this is an exception under the definition.

Illegal drugs and guns are intertwined, leading to multiple examples of violence. A high percentage of crime is directly or indirectly connected to drugs. A simple google search of firearms and drugs results in a significant reported number of incidents of violence and highlights the connection between the two. Many of the shootings in Maryland have a direct nexus to the distribution of drugs and the access to firearms.

SB 35 is intended to provide prosecutors the ability to seek sentences consistent with the rising level of violence witnessed in our communities. Therefore, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORTS** removing the exception under the current definition of "Crime of Violence" and urges a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB 35.