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Testimony in Opposition
Forfeiture of Firearms - Sale to Dealer
SB 290/HB 1288
Karen Herren, JD, Director of Legislative Affairs
Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence

February 11, 2020

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence is a local, grassroots organization dedicated to reducing gun deaths and injuries throughout the state of Maryland, with a particular focus on reducing urban gun violence and gun suicide. **We urge the committee to vote UNFAVORABLY on SB 290/HB 1288 which allows law enforcement to sell confiscated firearms to federally licensed firearm dealers.**

It is inappropriate to give the appearance that law enforcement might be incentivized to confiscate firearms in order to profit from asset forfeiture. Effective law enforcement is a critical component to combating crime, especially gun violence in Maryland. As has been acknowledged by officials, after numerous incidences where Maryland law enforcement agencies have been guilty of breaching the public trust, there is much to be repaired in relationships and policies in order to strengthen these agencies and build community relationships. Setting up a program like this is not likely to help further this cause.

Furthermore, with agencies whose task it is to combat crime and who are often placed in trauma-inducing situations, it defies reason that they would be doing anything that puts deadly weapons back on the streets. Doing so increases the availability of firearms which could be used again to kill or injure additional police officers and citizens.

MPGV urges the committee vote UNFAVORABLY on Senate Bill 290/House Bill 1288, Forfeiture of Firearms - Sale to Dealer which would allow law enforcement to profit from firearm confiscation and would put deadly weapons into continuous circulation.