



Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc.

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Honorable Members of the
Maryland House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Md. 21401

**Subject: HB-0004 Public Safety - Rifles and Shotguns – Secondary Transactions
OPPOSE**

Dear Honorable Delegates:

I represent the Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (WCFSC) which is comprised of eighteen hunting clubs and sportsmen's associations with nearly six thousand individual members in Washington County. As President of the Federation, I work together with the leadership of a much wider Coalition of Western Maryland Sportsmen's Clubs for the benefit of not only Washington County Sportsmen, but also for the five most western counties of Maryland.

I, as a private citizen of this state and as the representative of the Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc. **strongly urge you to oppose HB-0004, Titled: Public Safety - Rifles & Shotguns – Secondary Transactions.**

According to the National Fish & Wildlife Service and our own Department of Natural Resources there are nearly 88,000 licensed hunters in our state that spend approximately \$240 million per year in hunting related activities that mainly utilize sporting long-guns. Of that \$240 million, about \$120 million is spent on a nearly endless list of related gear and hardware such as optics, clothing, shells and the like. In addition, many thousands of other folks utilize shotguns and rifles in both competitive and/or recreational shooting events such as still targets, trap, skeet and sporting clays. These folks spend millions of dollars more each year in their individual pursuits.

Most hunters and competitive shooters are always on the lookout for that perfect long gun with a smoother action, better balance, and just the right sighting plane, weight and

comfortable feel. There are many calibers, many gauges, many styles and designs each suited for a particular hunting or shooting event. It is very common that folks engaging in these sports often own several different models of shotguns and rifles. Loaning, buying and selling of these types of sporting long guns informally between individual sportsmen & women has been and shall remain an integral part of the perpetual quest to acquire the “perfect” rifle or shotgun suited for a particular sportsman or woman and their particular quest. It is not uncommon for these acquisitions over a lifetime to lead to superb and priceless collections.

It is not clear what the objectives of this bill truly are since these types of firearms are long guns used for sporting purposes and are generally not a preferred implement of career criminals due to the difficulty with concealment. One thing is certain though. The long-gun sportsmen all over this state and residents of rural western Maryland angrily regard this bill as a slap in their face and an over-reaching infringement on the pursuit of their sport and recreation. Requiring formal transactions involving licensed dealers to conduct secondary transfers of sporting long-guns and the associated fees involved can only be viewed as an attack on the sporting firearms community. We are sportsmen, not criminals. We are offended to be treated as such. Criminals will not be affected by this legislation, but we will. Again!

Lastly, and most unfortunately, this very restrictive legislation will most likely funnel normal law-abiding citizens unwittingly into some type of criminal activity via a technicality of law while merely trying to enjoy and share their sport. This proposed legislation is over-reaching, very unnecessary, and predictably will be ineffective.

Again, I strongly urge you to oppose HB-0004.

Respectfully,

Joe Winter

Joe Winter
President, WCFSC

“Sportsmen & Conservationists, working together...”