

Written Testimony of Cheryl Brooks
SUPPORT HB 4

TO: Chair Luke Clippinger, Vice-Chair Vanessa Atterbeary, and Members of the Maryland House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Cheryl Brooks, Westminster, MD (District 5)

DATE: January 15, 2020

Hello, my name is Cheryl Brooks. I live in Westminster, MD. I'm a volunteer with the Carroll County Local Group of the Maryland Chapter of Moms Demand Action. I'm also a mother, a wife, and a gun violence survivor. My son, Michael, died by suicide with a gun. I'm here today to support House Bill 4.

HB4 MYTH #4: Background checks wouldn't have any impact on gun deaths by suicide.

FACT: Without background checks on private sales of all guns, someone at risk for suicide could easily circumvent the state's "red flag" law by buying a rifle or shot gun from a private seller.

Maryland's 2018 red flag law is working to help keep guns away from people who are at immediate risk of suicide, by temporarily removing firearms from the situation, and making the person a prohibited purchaser. Without a background check, there would be no way to know if a potential buyer was subject to an Extreme Risk Protection Order under the red flag law, making it easy for them to access guns while the order remains in effect.

Thank you for your time.