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MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the House Judiciary Committee
From: Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) - Shaoli Katana, Esq., Advocacy Director
Subject: House Bill 952 - Crimes – Firearms – Penalties and Procedures (Violent Firearms Offender Act of 2023)
Date: March 8, 2023
Position: Oppose

The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) respectfully opposes **House Bill 952 - Crimes – Firearms – Penalties and Procedures (Violent Firearms Offender Act of 2023)**. HB952 establishes, alters, and clarifies penalties for and elements of certain firearm-related crimes; prohibits a District Court commissioner from authorizing the pretrial release of a certain defendant charged with a certain firearm-related crime under certain circumstances; and prohibits a dealer or other person from selling, renting, loaning, or transferring a regulated firearm to a purchaser, lessee, borrower or transferee under certain circumstances.

MSBA represents more attorneys and judges than any other organization across the State in all practice areas. MSBA serves as the voice of Maryland's legal profession. Through its Laws Committee and various practice-specific sections, MSBA monitors and takes positions on legislation of importance to the legal profession.

HB952 establishes and alters penalties for gun-related crimes and offenses, including several mandatory sentencing provisions. MSBA opposes these provisions of the bill, as they interfere with judicial discretion and a judge's important role in analyzing the particulars of a case and individual circumstances before sentencing.

MSBA has concerns with the details of this legislation and respectfully requests an unfavorable report. For additional information, please feel free to contact Shaoli Katana at MSBA at shaoli@msba.org.