



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 14, 2024

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 784 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of support for Senate Bill (SB) 784 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act. This bill would impose an excise tax on certain gross receipts of firearms dealers derived from the sales of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition in the State. The resulting funds would be distributed to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical System, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program, and the new Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention (the Center) within the Department.

The Department supports this proposal, which links the sale of firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories to prevention and mitigation programming to respond to and prevent the injury and suffering caused by firearms-related injuries and deaths. The bill, which does not prevent the sale or possession of firearms, provides the State and its communities with resources to help offset the harmful physical, social, and psychological trauma that results from firearm injuries and deaths. Funding mitigation programming through this excise tax would help to alleviate the economic burden and trauma posed by firearm injuries and deaths. The resulting distribution to the Department's Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention will support the public health approach to firearm violence activities throughout Maryland that incorporates upstream prevention initiatives with community engagement and partnerships with State and local agencies. The revenue from this proposal will support the Center's mission to reduce firearm violence, harm from firearm violence, and misuse of firearms in Maryland.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary