

# **SB784-Comprehensive community Safety Funding Act C**

Uploaded by: Adam Rosenberg

Position: FAV

A LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH GROUP

# CENTER FOR HOPE

Advancing hope, healing and resilience



**Adam Rosenberg, Esq.**

Executive Director, Center for Hope

Date: February 14, 2024

To: Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, Budget and Tax Committee Members

Reference: SB784-Comprehensive community Safety Funding Act

Position: Support

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members,

On behalf of LifeBridge Health's Center for Hope we thank you for this opportunity to provide comments and urge your support for Senate Bill 784. Center for Hope annually provides intervention and prevention services for over 7,700 survivors and caregivers impacted by child abuse, domestic violence, community violence, and elder justice. Over 4,300 of our population helped last year were children – many who were witness to, affected by, living regularly with gun violence. We recognize the devastating impact of violence on our community's health, and the growing number of victims of all ages affected. Violence is a public health issue, and we need to respond to our communities by partnering with the people in them to break the cycle of violence. The Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act (Senate Bill 784) would impose an 11% excise tax on gross receipts from companies' firearm manufacturers. The legislation does not directly tax consumers.

SB784 directs new revenue to programs that are prepared to address violence via a medical intervention when needed, ensure victims of violence are supported, expand community-based violence intervention grants, and establish a Firearm Violence Prevention Center to conduct gun violence research, mitigating risks, early intervention strategies and assisting in implementing policy.

After decades of inaction, raising the tax on firearms would provide an offset to the massive cost to society of gun violence – exactly as taxes on alcohol and tobacco have successfully done. At the same time, this legislation will provide critical resources to critical programs have been historically underfunded. "The health of our communities is only as strong as the wellbeing of its citizens. Gun violence is not just a public safety issue, it's a public health crisis," said LifeBridge Health President and Chief Executive Officer Neil Meltzer.

Center for Hope within LifeBridge Health is the only model that integrates violence intervention and prevention throughout our hospital and community-based programs. To date our data has shown that based on our combined efforts with our safe streets sites, hospital responders, Center for Hope clinicians, we have seen a 28% drop in Gun Shot Wound admissions which represents an overall 33% reduction in emergency department trauma volume. These programs can drive results and need sustainable funding to be effective.

For all the above stated reasons, we request a Favorable report.

For more information, please contact:

Adam Rosenberg, Esq.

Executive Director, Center for Hope

Vice President, Violence Intervention & Prevention, LifeBridge Health

[arosenberg@lifebridgehealth.org](mailto:arosenberg@lifebridgehealth.org)

# **2024 Legislation -(SB 784- Comprehensive Community**

Uploaded by: Ben Steffen

Position: FAV



**2024 SESSION**  
**POSITION PAPER**

**BILL NO:** SB 784  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation Committee  
**POSITION:** Support  
**TITLE:** Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

**BILL ANALYSIS**

*SB 784- Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act* establishes an 11 percent excise tax on sales of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition. The bill sets out the requirements, the amount of, how and when the excise tax will be collected. Additionally, the bill specifies that a certain percentage of the excise tax revenue is to be disbursed to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program, and the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE**

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) supports *SB 784* and believes that firearm injuries and deaths continue to be a cost to health care systems and a major public health problem. Firearm deaths and injuries cost Maryland \$10.5 billion each year, of which \$384 million is paid by taxpayers.<sup>1</sup> In Maryland, 35 percent of gun deaths are suicides and 63% are homicides. By comparison in the US, 57 percent of gun deaths are suicides and 40% are homicides.

In Maryland, the MIEMSS Trauma Registry and HSCRC Hospital data sets show that approximately 1,700 gunshot victims were admitted to Maryland trauma centers in 2022-23. Another 370 patients were admitted to Maryland acute care hospitals that did not have a trauma center.<sup>2</sup> According to MIEMSS data, over 85 percent of the firearm injuries that trigger a trauma center admission occur among adolescents and adults between the age of 15-44, with almost all the remaining victims in the 45-64 age group.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> EveryStat.org, Gun Violence in Maryland, May 2023, accessed at <https://everystat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Gun-Violence-in-Maryland-2.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> HSCRC and MHCC analysis of HSCRC hospital discharge data for CY 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, 2022-203 Annual Report, accessed at <https://www.miemss.org/home/Portals/0/Docs/AnnualReports/Annual-Report-2023.pdf>

The costs of firearm injuries are high even compared to other types of trauma. RACSTC the average inpatient hospitalization averaged \$76,293, while a patient with a firearm injury costs \$104,619. These costs only capture the facility charges for the initial trauma visit. Subsequent hospital admission at community hospitals, inpatient and outpatient treatment, physician charges, and outpatient pharmacy costs are not included in the costs. Nor are the lifelong costs of a firearm injury that often imposes additional psychological injuries and may limit the ability to work and support oneself and loved ones.

Johns Hopkins Adult Trauma Center and the University of Maryland (UM) Capital Region Medical Center also treat significant numbers of firearm injuries. UM Capital Region Medical Center's expertise in treating these injuries has grown in the last several years with the opening of the new medical center. All but the most serious firearm injuries are now treated at that trauma center rather than being transferred to RACSTC. The reality that multiple trauma centers have needed to develop capabilities in the treatment of severe firearm injury is one testament to the scope of the firearm injury challenge. It is appropriate that this legislation directs 44 percent of the revenue from excise tax (net of the Comptroller's administrative costs) to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, a fund that benefits all Maryland trauma centers.

*SB 784* would apply an 11 percent excise tax on firearms, accessories, and ammunition. The principle of assessing a small charge on the mechanism causing a trauma injury is well established in Maryland. Automobile registrations and registration renewals in Maryland are subject to a surcharge. As the Maryland trauma system is under financial stress, generating revenue from the gun and related equipment sales is appropriate given firearms are the cause of some of the most costly trauma injuries.

The *Commission to Study Trauma Funding* considered additional sources of funding during its meetings in the fall of 2023. Raising the automobile registration surcharge, adding a trauma surcharge for moving automobile and DWI violations, and assessing excise taxes on guns and related equipment were all discussed. Commissioners recognized that additional revenue was needed and there was also broad support for applying an excise tax to gun and ammunition sales. Many Commission members observed that while a higher automobile surcharge would be needed, other mechanisms of trauma injury should also be assessed.

Firearms play a significant role in driving Maryland residents' trauma costs and on broader public health costs. For these reasons the MHCC asks for a favorable report on *SB 784*.



# **SB0784\_Comprehensive\_Community\_Safety\_Funding\_Act\_**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0784  
COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SAFETY FUNDING ACT**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Elfreth

**Committee:** Budget and Tax

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0784 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Guns are big business for manufacturers and distributors. They are sold without a care to the harm that they are causing to our society. Our members believe that it is time that those businesses that deal in firearms are penalized for the harm they are causing.

This bill, if enacted, would subject firearms dealers to an excise tax imposed on their gross receipts from the sale of guns, ammunition, and other firearm accessories. The money from this excise tax would go to fund the 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 Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention.

We believe that the ill-gotten gains from the gun dealers should be put to better use to curb violence in our state and to support those who have been harmed.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

# **Firearms Funding Act Testimony SB 784 2 14 24 fin**

Uploaded by: Clinton Wolcott

Position: FAV





**TESTIMONY OF THE CRITICAL ISSUES FORUM: ADVOCACY  
FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ON FEBRUARY 14, 2024,  
BEFORE THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE  
IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 784, REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE  
COMMUNITY SAFETY FUNDING ACT**

Honorable Chair Guy Guzzone, Vice-Chair Jim Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee:

The Critical Issues Forum: Advocacy for Social Justice (CIF) provides this testimony in support of SB 784, which would impose a tax on dealer receipts from the sale of firearms, firearms accessories, and ammunition in order to address costs associated with the use of these products.

This funding mechanism is a fair and logical approach to partially address the high financial toll that firearms exact on injured individuals, on our health care system, and on entities seeking to prevent and address gun violence. The bill directly allocates the money raised to established state programs that fund these critical needs.

CIF is a coalition of three synagogues, Temple Beth Ami, Kol Shalom, and Adat Shalom, that include over 1,750 households and three denominations of Judaism: Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist. CIF serves as a vehicle for our congregations to speak out on policy issues, such as gun violence prevention, that relate to our shared values, including the Jewish traditions that emphasize the sanctity and primary value of human life.

The severity of Maryland's gun violence problem is undeniable. According to the most recent statistics compiled by Everytown for Gun Safety, Maryland suffers an average of 796 firearm fatalities each year and the rate of gun deaths rose over 50% from 2012 to 2022.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most disturbing element of this crisis is its effect on our children. Firearms are the leading cause of death in children and youth ages 1 to 21 in Maryland and the United States, surpassing injuries and death from motor vehicle crashes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.everytown.org/state/maryland/>

<sup>2</sup> CDC WISQARS On-line Causes of Injury-Related Death Data Base, Violence-related Firearm Deaths; Both Sexes; Age Range: 1 – 21; All Races and Ethnicity; US and Maryland; 2021.

In addition, each year, an average of 1362 people are reported wounded by firearms in the state.<sup>3</sup> The cost of this carnage is not only human suffering. The estimated cost of medical care associated with gun violence averages approximately \$30,000 per person in the first year following the injury.<sup>4</sup> An Urban Institute study of firearm injuries in six states found that in each state, more than sixty percent of the hospital costs were incurred by people either without insurance or with public insurance and that, on average, the government offsets about sixty-five percent of medical providers' uncompensated care.<sup>5</sup> Using these figures, the cost to the government of treating injured gunshot victims in Maryland is over \$16,000,000.

Of course, the financial burden of gun violence extends far beyond the cost of treating the injured. The police must respond, the courts must adjudicate, community and social services must attempt to curb and address this issue, and individuals and their families suffer significant financial setbacks. One assessment of the total annual cost of gun violence in the state of Maryland put the average cost per resident at \$1,731 per year.<sup>6</sup>

Economists have a term for “social costs that are not taken into account by private decision makers” – “negative externalities.”<sup>7</sup> The most common example of a negative externality is pollution, a problem our governments actively address in a variety of ways. Importantly, government action that shifts at least some of the cost of negative externalities to the private decision-makers who cause them increases economic efficiency because “by imposing costs on others, negative externalities encourage inefficient behavior.”<sup>8</sup>

The use of an excise tax to address the costs associated with firearms sales is not new. Since 1919, the federal government has had a similar excise tax in place on guns and ammunition.<sup>9</sup> Revenues from this 11% excise tax go to the Wildlife Restoration Fund administered by the Fish & Wildlife Service, which distributes grants to states for wildlife conservation and programs to teach safe hunting practices.<sup>10</sup>

More recently, in 2023, the California legislature passed AB 28, which creates an 11% state excise tax on all guns, ammunition, and gun parts sold by licensed gun dealers in the state. The California law, as is true of the SB 784, is carefully targeted to address the costs of gun

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.everytown.org/state/maryland/>

<sup>4</sup> Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence Fact Sheet. <https://mdpgv.org/resources/>

<sup>5</sup> Brunson, Samuel D., "Paying for Gun Violence" (2019). Minnesota Law Review. 3239. <https://scholarship.law.umn.edu/mlr/3239>, p 610 (Brunson)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.everytown.org/state/maryland/>

<sup>7</sup> Brunson at 612-13.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid at 613.

<sup>9</sup> 26 USC Section 4181(a), see Duke Center for Firearms Law, <https://firearmslaw.duke.edu/2023/10/californias-new-excise-tax-on-guns-ammunition>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

ownership. It includes a Gun Violence Prevention and School Safety Fund, funding for firearms relinquishment, and victims' compensation.<sup>11</sup>

The excise tax on firearms and ammunition sales contained in SB 784 is also carefully targeted to shift a small amount of the costs of gun ownership from those harmed by it to the firearms industry. Specifically, section 2-4B-02 provides that, after money is allocated to pay for the administration of the tax, it would be apportioned to already existing state entities and funds that directly address gun violence – the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, the Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program, and the Center for Firearms Violence Prevention and Intervention.

By allocating excise tax money to priorities that the state has already identified to deal with the specific costs associated with gun violence, this bill shifts a small amount of the huge cost of gun violence from taxpayers who have been paying the government's share and to victims who have been uncompensated to the firearms industry. The bill also dovetails with Governor Moore's effort to coordinate the state's efforts to combat gun violence by creating a Center for Firearms Violence Prevention, pending as SB 475. CIF also supports that legislation.

The crisis of gun violence in our state must be addressed in a variety of ways, including keeping firearms out of the hands of dangerous individuals, promoting safe practices, preventing violence at the community and individual level, and treating and compensating the injured. The firearms industry must be part of this effort, and SB 784 provides one small measure in that direction.

For these reasons, CIF recommends a favorable report on SB 784.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid

**BaltimoreCounty\_FAV\_SB0784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Elisabeth Sachs

Position: FAV

JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*



JENNIFER AIOSA  
*Director of Government Affairs*

AMANDA KONTZ CARR  
*Legislative Officer*

WILLIAM J. THORNE  
*Legislative Associate*

**BILL NO.:** SB 784  
**TITLE:** Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act  
**SPONSOR:** Senator Elfreth  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation  
**POSITION:** **SUPPORT**  
**DATE:** February 14, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 784 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act. The legislation imposes an excise tax on firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition and will fund various important community public safety services.

Baltimore County supports initiatives that better fund the greater public safety apparatus. The revenue generated under SB 784 would direct further funding to the services that prevent violence and save lives in our communities. This legislation specifically directs a significant portion of the collected revenue to the R. Adam Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical System among other institutions. Shock Trauma plays a key role in Maryland’s EMS system; moreover, the unwavering dedication of the staff and the quality of its facilities save lives across our state every day. The State of Maryland must continue to provide the necessary funding to institutions such as Shock Trauma as we strive to protect our communities amidst the epidemic of gun violence and provide high-quality care in the face of tragedies.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 784 from the Senate Budget and Taxation committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).

# **Senate Bill 784-Comprehensive Community Safety Fun**

Uploaded by: james gannon

Position: FAV

February 14, 2024

To: Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe and Budget & Taxation Committee Members

Bill: Senate Bill 784-Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

Position: Favorable

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Committee Members,

On behalf of Sinai Hospital of Baltimore (“Sinai Hospital”) and LifeBridge Health, we respectfully offer our comments and urge your support for Senate Bill 784. We thank Senator Elfreth and the Chairman for the ongoing leadership to support our trauma system in Maryland. The Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act (Senate Bill 784) would impose an 11% excise tax on gross receipts from companies’ firearm manufacturers. The legislation does not directly tax consumers. SB784 directs new revenue to programs that are prepared to address violence via a medical intervention when needed (Maryland Trauma Fund), ensure victims of violence are supported, expand community-based violence intervention grants, and establish a Firearm Violence Prevention Center to conduct gun violence research, mitigating risks, early intervention strategies and assisting in implementing policy.

The state’s Trauma Physicians Services Fund, which helps cover costs for uncompensated medical care by trauma physicians, for Medicaid-enrolled patients, essential trauma equipment purchases, and for other trauma related on-call and standby expenses, currently generates \$12 million annually primarily through a motor vehicle registration fee. Maryland currently has ten facilities that are designated by the state to be trauma centers. Sinai Hospital is one of the largest Level II Trauma Centers serving the greater Baltimore area.

In 2003, the Maryland General Assembly created the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund (‘Trauma Fund’) to financially assist Maryland’s trauma centers. In the subsequent 20 years, the need for this support has significantly grown. The General Assembly passed legislation last year instructing the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) in consultation with other stakeholders to study the structure, criteria, and the funding needs within The Fund. The MHCC concluded that “it is in the public’s best interest to fund a trauma system that is in a perpetual state of readiness for the next injured person” wherever they may be throughout Maryland.

The MHCC recognized that all of Maryland’s trauma centers are under financial stress due to undercompensated costs to maintain trauma readiness twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, three hundred sixty-five days a year. These costs vary relative to level of trauma center designation, patient volume and geographic location. Each designation level and subsequent requirements are established by the American College of Surgeons national guidelines and Maryland COMAR and are held accountable by MIEMSS.

The MHCC and MIEMSS study included several consensus recommendations that seek to modify the existing scope of the Trauma Fund, while allowing flexibility for its administration especially in managing reserve funds to support evolving trauma center needs, raising the already existing assessment on motor vehicle registration (\$5 per biennial registration) and potentially identifying other revenue sources (such as this bill) to support increased investment in trauma care.

**CARE BRAVELY**

We appreciate the facilitation provided by the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) and MIEMSS working with all State trauma centers in developing several recommendations that strengthen and make trauma funding more accessible statewide. The distribution criteria should take into consideration the unique needs of the Maryland Trauma System with fair and equitable distribution across all trauma centers. We thank the MHCC, MIEMSS and Legislative Leaders in working with stakeholders to ensure trauma centers have the needed resources to always be at the ready to deliver critical trauma care to the citizens of Maryland.

For all the above stated reasons, we request a Favorable report on Senate Bill 784.

For more information, please contact:

James Gannon MS, RN, CEN

Trauma Program Manager

Sinai Hospital of Baltimore-LifeBridge Health System

[Jgannon@lifebridgehealth.org](mailto:Jgannon@lifebridgehealth.org)

Jennifer Witten

Vice President Government Relations

[jwitten2@lifebridgehealth.org](mailto:jwitten2@lifebridgehealth.org)

Attachment: Fact Sheet on Sinai Level II Trauma Program



**SB 0784 - B&T - PHPA - LOS (1) (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Jason Caplan

Position: FAV



## 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](mailto:sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

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

# **CCSFA (SB784) - Testimony 2024-3.pdf**

Uploaded by: Karen Herren

Position: FAV



Testimony in Support of the  
Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act  
SB 784/HB 935  
Executive Director Karen Herren  
Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence

February 14, 2024

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and distinguished members of the committee, Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence (MPGV) is a statewide organization dedicated to reducing gun deaths and injuries in Maryland. We urge the committee for an **Favorable** report on **Senate Bill 784**.

Senate Bill 784 proposes to establish an 11% excise tax on firearms, ammunition, and certain related products to fund programs in order to offset the devastating effects that the firearm industry has on society. This bill is a critical step towards holding the firearms industry accountable for the impact of their products on our communities while providing much-needed resources to address this urgent public health crisis.

### **HISTORICAL PRECEDENT**

For over a century, the firearms industry has been subject to a federal level excise tax on firearms, ammunition, and parts and accessories under the Pittman-Robertson Act<sup>1</sup>. For most of this time, the proceeds from this tax have gone to offset the harm the industry inflicts on wildlife conservation efforts<sup>2</sup>. Meanwhile, the firearms industry continues to enjoy record growth and profits while largely evading financial responsibility for the havoc wrought by its products on human lives and communities. This is all despite the fact that recent trends in the industry indicate that a dwindling percentage of firearm related sales are toward hunting efforts.<sup>3</sup> It is time for the firearms industry to bear more of the costs of the societal harm their products enable.

### **GROWTH OF THE INDUSTRY**

In economic data presented by the National Shooting Sports Foundation the industry has enjoyed exponential growth and profit in recent years. By their own calculations, the firearm industry's economic impact has risen 322% since 2008<sup>4</sup>. This impact is not

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<sup>1</sup> 16 U.S.C.A. §669 et seq

<sup>2</sup> [Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act explained](#)

<sup>3</sup> A 2021 [study](#) by Southwick Associates estimated that about one-quarter (25.8 percent) of all firearms and ammunition sold in 2020 were purchased for hunting.

<sup>4</sup> [economic imp act - report | 2023](#);

<https://www3.nssf.org/share/PDF/EconomicImpact/2022data/maryland.pdf>

factoring in the actual cost to society of the gun violence that their products facilitate. During this time of the industry's exponential growth, we have witnessed an unprecedented spike in shootings and gun homicides across the nation and in Maryland.

## **COST OF GUN VIOLENCE**

Taxing the firearms industry is not only a reasonable measure but a necessary one to generate sustained revenue for programs that mitigate the devastating societal effects of gun violence. According to CDC data from 2011 to 2021, the nationwide firearm homicide rate increased 85 percent. In an average year in America, gun violence kills 40,000 people, wounds another 76,000, and costs a staggering \$557 billion<sup>5</sup>. In Maryland, we are seeing almost 800 people die by guns annually with another 1,400 wounded. The estimated economic cost in the state of this epidemic is around \$10.5 billion with at least \$383.9 million being paid by taxpayers<sup>6</sup>.

For some context, the \$557 billion national number is five times the nation's budget for the Department of Education, which funds preschool through college for millions of Americans. Imagine the good we could do allocating those resources toward beneficial and productive investments such as educating the next generation instead of the need to pay for the tragic consequences of gun violence<sup>7</sup>.

Firearms and ammunition sold by licensed manufacturers, dealers, and vendors of these products contribute to gun violence and broader harms. Whether through corrupt or negligent licensed dealers, straw purchasers, or theft and loss from sellers, gun dealers are the leading source of firearms trafficked to illegal markets. For years, the industry has rejected modernizing systems that could assist in stemming this flow, resisted mandates that would require stronger gun store security to prevent theft, and/or innovations in the products themselves that would make them safer and less accessible to non-authorized users.

Taxing the firearms industry would place a reasonable cost on its members profiting from the sale of their products in order to generate sustained revenue for programs that are designed to remediate the devastating effects these products cause families and communities across this state. As survivors, families, communities, employers, and taxpayers, we all pay for the enormous costs associated with this violence, whether we own a gun or not.

## **MARYLAND EXAMPLES**

On July 2, 2023 a mass shooting in the Brooklyn Homes neighborhood of Baltimore led to 2 deaths and 28 wounded. In addition to the devastating human loss and suffering, the economic costs of this one event are staggering. This one horrific incident of gun violence left an estimated \$59.3 million price tag, of which \$2.5 million is borne by taxpayers.<sup>8</sup>

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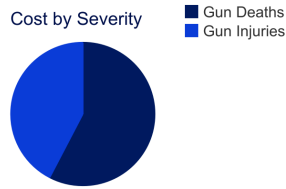
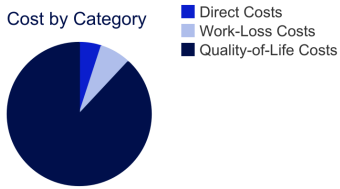
<sup>5</sup> <https://everystat.org/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://everystat.org/#Maryland>

<sup>7</sup> [https://everytownresearch.org/report/the-economic-cost-of-gun-violence/?\\_gl=1\\*sfct83\\*\\_ga\\*NDM2MDkzNDc1LjE3MDcyNDI0MjQ.\\*\\_ga\\_LT0FWV3EK3\\*MTcwNzI0MjQyNS4xLjEuMTcwNzI0MjQ0NS4wLjAuMA..](https://everytownresearch.org/report/the-economic-cost-of-gun-violence/?_gl=1*sfct83*_ga*NDM2MDkzNDc1LjE3MDcyNDI0MjQ.*_ga_LT0FWV3EK3*MTcwNzI0MjQyNS4xLjEuMTcwNzI0MjQ0NS4wLjAuMA..)

<sup>8</sup> <https://everytownresearch.org/report/economic-cost-calculator/>

Cost to society for 2 gun deaths and 28 nonfatal gun injuries (Mass Shooting) in Maryland.

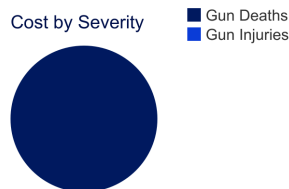
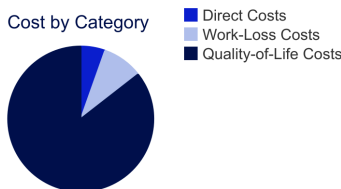


Emergency Transport	\$8,608
Medical Care	\$834,005
Mental Health Care	\$33,137
Police	\$1,552,423
Criminal Justice	\$448,354
Employer	\$68,495
Work-Loss Costs	\$4,111,228
Quality-of-Life Costs	\$52,247,958

Total cost to Maryland: **\$59,304,206**

Even a single homicide is estimated to cost the state \$17.5 million in costs to survivors and families directly affected, employers, government, and the broader community. Taxpayers shoulder \$925,959 of this through the government portion of medical and mental health care, first responders, ambulances, police response and investigations, and criminal justice services.<sup>9</sup>

Cost to society for 1 gun deaths and 0 nonfatal gun injuries (Assault or Homicide) in Maryland.



Emergency Transport	\$890
Medical Care	\$8,985
Mental Health Care	\$13,028
Police	\$202,657
Criminal Justice	\$710,487
Employer	\$12,218
Work-Loss Costs	\$1,581,047
Quality-of-Life Costs	\$14,982,967

Total cost to Maryland: **\$17,512,280**

<https://everytownresearch.org/report/economic-cost-calculator/#economic-cost-calculator>

<sup>9</sup> <https://everytownresearch.org/report/economic-cost-calculator/#economic-cost-calculator>

Quantifying what we spend in the aftermath of a shooting—whether the shooting was unintentional, an assault, a shooting by police, or an act of suicide—helps us understand the price we pay for this violence.

## KEY INITIATIVES

By passing Senate Bill 784, Maryland can take a decisive stand against gun violence and invest in programs that prioritize public safety, improve community well-being, and address the damage of gun violence. The bill specifically allocates money to the following initiatives:

- **The Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund** - Allocates funding to medical systems to address trauma-related healthcare costs, with a significant portion attributed to gun violence. The medical care associated with gun violence is notably expensive, averaging approximately \$30,000 for survivors in the year following the injury<sup>10</sup>.
- **The R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical System** - The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center is a world renowned medical facility specializing in providing emergency trauma care and critical medical treatment to patients who have experienced severe injuries or medical emergencies. It is recognized for its expertise in trauma care and its commitment to saving lives in critical situations<sup>11</sup>.
- **The Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund** - Administered by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, MD VIPP finances organizations providing violence intervention and prevention services in heavily impacted communities<sup>12</sup>.
- **The Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program** - Managed by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, this program offers victim assistance, advocacy, and support, ensuring survivors exercise their legal rights<sup>13</sup>.
- **The Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention within the Maryland Department of Health** - Taking a public health approach, this office will coordinate efforts to address, prevent, and intervene in gun violence. It will be housed within the Maryland Department of Health.

**We urge a FAVORABLE report on SB784.**

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<sup>10</sup> <https://hms.harvard.edu/news/business-case-reducing-gun-violence>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.umms.org/ummc/health-services/shock-trauma/about>

<sup>12</sup> <https://goccp.maryland.gov/grants/programs/vipp/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://goccp.maryland.gov/grants/programs/sohg/>

# **Support - SB 784 Comprehensive Community Safety Fu**

Uploaded by: Ken Shilling

Position: FAV





## Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

### Testimony in Support of - SB 784- Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

TO: Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair Budget and Taxation Committee  
FROM: Ken Shilling, Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland  
Gun Violence Prevention Lead Advocate  
DATE: February 11, 2024

As a Unitarian Universalist, I know that conscience will not be quieted by anything less than truth and justice. Gun violence is a public health epidemic in this country.

Gun violence is the leading cause of death for our children. We have a moral duty to provide sustained funding of effective programs dedicated to victim support and violence prevention. In the spirit of love that binds us in community, I ask you to support **SB 784 - Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act.**

I give sacred witness to the trauma, grief, and economic burden caused by gun violence. Victims of gun violence suffer shock trauma comparable to wounds suffered by our military. The trauma-related health care is specialized and expensive. Moreover, survivors of homicide victims deserve victim assistance, advocacy and support as they deal with their grief and trauma from their loss of loved ones.

We need to restore public safety to our communities. Our communities are disrupted by gun violence. Our communities need violence intervention and prevention services to reduce the impact of gun violence. We need to fund a holistic approach to address, intervene, and prevent gun violence in our communities.

SB 784 requires an excise tax on certain gross receipts of certain firearms dealers derived from the sales of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition in the State. This tax targets the industry profits, not consumers, and supports programs vital to our communities.

We have a moral duty to provide for public safety. Let us act together in Love.

We urge a favorable report. Vote for Senate Bill 784,

*Ken Shilling*

Ken Shilling, Gun Violence Prevention Lead Advocate

**SB 784 - WLCMD - FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Laure Ruth

Position: FAV

BILL NO: Senate Bill 784  
TITLE: Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act  
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation  
HEARING DATE: February 14, 2024  
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

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Senate Bill 784 would impose an excise tax on certain firearms dealers based on gross receipts of sales of firearms, certain accessories, and ammunition. The Women's Law Center of Maryland (WLC) supports SB 784 as a reasonable way to involve gun sales with the extreme trauma and violence caused by guns in our state.

Of the 37 domestic violence related deaths in Maryland in 2023, 73% were caused by guns. Higher rates of firearm ownership correlate to a higher rate of domestic violence homicide according to a 2019 study<sup>1</sup>. There is a 65% higher incidence rate of domestic firearm homicide in the states with the highest firearm ownership compared to states with lower ownership rates<sup>2</sup>. Since women are the most common victims of domestic violence homicide, they are most at risk with increased gun ownership<sup>3</sup>. The risk of homicide for women increases by 500% with the presence of a gun in the home<sup>4</sup>.

The WLC has had clients murdered by their abusers using a gun. The most recent was in September 2023. The consequences of this are still happening to the now motherless 6-year-old in the case.

Under SB 784, after administrative costs, proceeds would be distributed to a variety of organizations and centers that are required to deal with the fallout from gun violence. See page 4, lines 24-25 through page 5, lines 1-8. This funding would supplement, not supplant, any other funding for these places. In effect, the revenue from this excise tax will go directly to places that daily experience the trauma caused by gun use.

Therefore, the Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 784.

***The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, membership organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change.***

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<sup>1</sup> Kivisto, A.J., Magee, L.A., Phalen, P.L., Ray, B.R. (2019). Firearm ownership and domestic versus nondomestic homicide in the U.S. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Abstract:  
[https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(19\)30197-7/fulltext#articleInformation](https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(19)30197-7/fulltext#articleInformation)

<sup>2</sup> Merovsh, Sarah. "Gun Ownership Rates Tied to Domestic Homicides, but Not Other Killings, Study Finds," NY Times, (July 22, 2019) <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/22/us/gun-ownership-violence-statistics.html>

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> The National Domestic Violence Hotline, Retrieved 1/29/21, <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/safety-planning-around-guns-and-firearms/>.

# **Councilmember Laurie-Anne Sayles Testimony SB784.p**

Uploaded by: Laurie-Anne Sayles

Position: FAV



**COUNCILMEMBER LAURIE-ANNE SAYLES**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**AT LARGE**

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

February 13, 2024

TO: Senator Guy Guzzone  
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee

FROM: Laurie-Anne Sayles  
Montgomery County Council Member At-Large

RE: Senate Bill 784, *Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act*

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I am writing to support **SB784 - Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**. In the 3rd quarter of last year, rates of gun violence continued to rise in Montgomery County. There was a 40% increase in non-contact shootings, a 55% increase in accidental discharges, and, across the whole year, a 37.5% increase in homicides. Meanwhile, nationally, rates of gun violence fell 10.7%. These troubling numbers demonstrate that gun violence remains a significant concern despite our county's best efforts to minimize the proliferation of firearms.

Last year, a Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge struck down significant portions of a local bill, the SAFE Act, that restricted the possession of firearms in public places. Similarly, last year, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Maryland's handgun qualification law was overly restrictive and unconstitutional. I am unconvinced that a reprieve will be granted, forcing us to look for alternative methods to curb incidents of gun violence.

Given the current direction of the United States Supreme Court and the limitation of Montgomery County to pass additional safety measures, it now rests on the State to protect its citizens from the plague of unrestricted firearm access. Not only does SB784 make it more expensive to purchase a firearm or ammunition, but it also directs funds from gun sales toward the Trauma Center at the University of Maryland, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program, grants for survivors of homicides, and The Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention.

SB784 has significant potential to reduce the proliferation of gun violence by making it more expensive to purchase a firearm and ammunition. Also, by funding essential violence

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COUNCILMEMBER.SAYLES@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV



intervention and prevention programs, the bill makes it clear that Maryland is serious about prioritizing the safety of our residents over the profit of the firearm industry. For these reasons, I urge a favorable vote on SB 784, and I appreciate your consideration.

CC: Members of the Finance Committee

**SB 784\_MNADV\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Melanie Shapiro

Position: FAV



**BILL NO:** Senate Bill 784  
**TITLE:** Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation  
**HEARING DATE:** February 14, 2024  
**POSITION:** **SUPPORT**

---

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 784.**

Of the 37 domestic violence related deaths in Maryland in 2023, 73% were caused by guns. Higher rates of firearm ownership correlate to a higher rate of domestic violence homicide according to a 2019 study.<sup>1</sup> There is a 65% higher incidence rate of domestic firearm homicide in the states with the highest firearm ownership compared to states with lower ownership rates.<sup>2</sup> Since women are the most common victims of domestic violence homicide, they are most at risk with increased gun ownership.<sup>3</sup> The risk of homicide for women increases by 500% with the presence of a gun in the home.<sup>4</sup>

Senate Bill 784 would impose an excise tax on certain gross receipts of certain firearms dealers derived from the sales of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition in the State. Revenue generated from the excise tax would be distributed to specific hospital and physician funds as well as the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program, and the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention. Due to the high lethality risk for victims of domestic violence with the presence of a firearm, MNADV supports SB 784 which would generate revenue to support those seeking to assist victims and loved ones of victims of gun violence and efforts to prevent future gun violence.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on SB 784.**

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<sup>1</sup> Kivisto, A.J., Magee, L.A., Phalen, P.L., Ray, B.R. (2019). Firearm ownership and domestic versus nondomestic homicide in the U.S. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Abstract: [https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(19\)30197-7/fulltext#articleInformation](https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(19)30197-7/fulltext#articleInformation)

<sup>2</sup> Merovsh, Sarah. "Gun Ownership Rates Tied to Domestic Homicides, but Not Other Killings, Study Finds," NY Times, (July 22, 2019) <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/22/us/gun-ownership-violence-statistics.html>

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> The National Domestic Violence Hotline, Retrieved 1/29/21, <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/safety-planning-around-guns-and-firearms/>

For further information contact Melanie Shapiro ■ Public Policy Director ■ 301-852-3930 ■ [mshapiro@mnadv.org](mailto:mshapiro@mnadv.org)



**SB784 - Support Written Testimony\_FINAL.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Huber

Position: FAV

**TO:** The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair  
*Senate, Budget & Taxation Committee*

**FROM:** Michael Huber  
*Director, Maryland Government Affairs*

**DATE:** February 14, 2024

**RE:** SB 784 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

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Johns Hopkins supports **SB 784 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**. This bill establishes an excise tax on gross receipts of firearm dealers from the sales of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition sold in the state of Maryland. It directs the revenue to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program within the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, and the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention within the Maryland Department of Health.

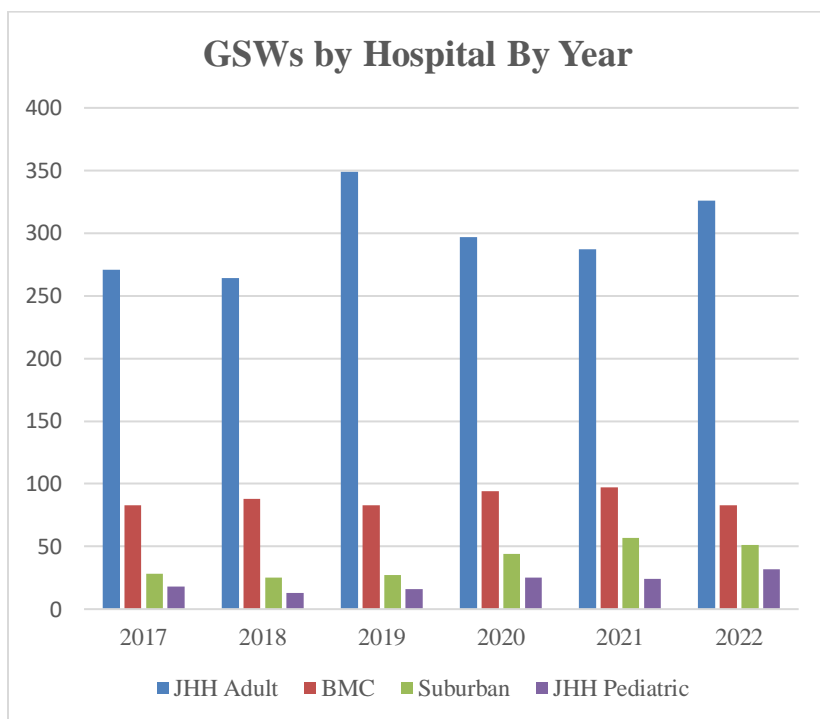
There are four state-designated trauma centers within the Johns Hopkins Health System that manage trauma care. Johns Hopkins Hospital (JHH) – East Baltimore, which encompasses two hospital centers Adult and Pediatric, Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center (JHBMC), and Suburban Hospital (SH).

Maryland has a unique funding model that provides resources to every trauma center across the state, ensuring high quality care to Marylanders when they are seriously injured wherever they are. The funding comes through the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund (“The Trauma Fund”). Johns Hopkins is proud of the work it performs caring for trauma patients in the state, but there are challenges with providing that care. First, is the high volume of gunshot wound victims we treat at our centers. Second, is the significant financial commitment towards maintaining the operating costs for trauma center readiness. In an effort to support the wellbeing of the communities we serve, trauma programs have specialized staff different from non-trauma center hospitals in Maryland. Third, Johns Hopkins is working to address the root causes of gun violence by operating Hospital-based Violence Prevention Programs. Because SB 784 speaks directly to all three pieces, we eagerly support.

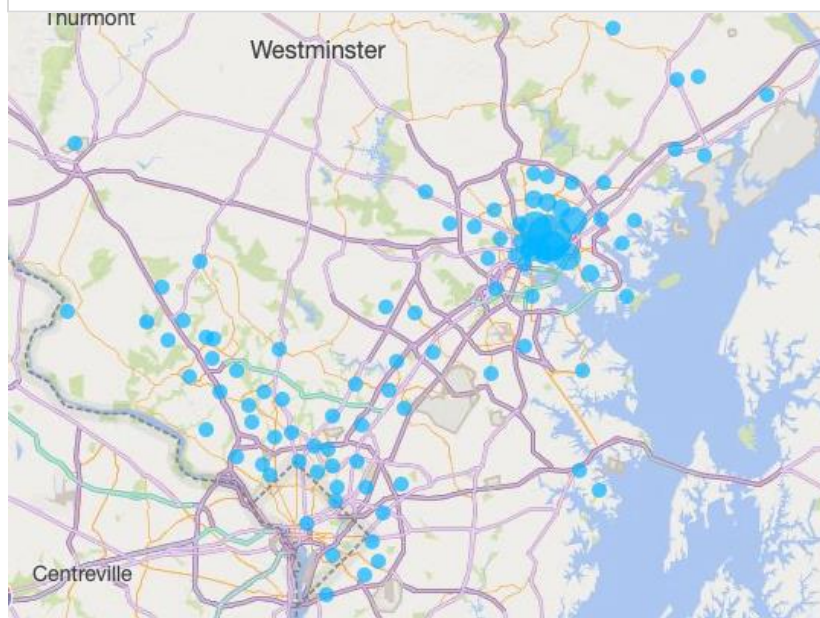
### **Maryland Trauma Centers Face a High Volume of Gunshot Wounds**

Firearm injuries pose a significant public health challenge, and Johns Hopkins’ Trauma centers play a crucial role in managing and treating such cases. Our centers treat firearm injuries in patients from across the state, but they predominately occur in Baltimore City. In 2022, we treated 326 patients with firearm injuries at JHH adult, 83 at JHBMC, 51 at SH, and 32 at JHH pediatric.

Over the previous six years, those numbers are as follows:



**Graph 1. Annual Volumes of GSW Patients Arriving to JHHS Hospitals**  
*(Trauma Registry Data)*



**Graph 2. GSW Injury by Zip code at JHHS Hospitals**  
*(Trauma Registry Data)*

These cases are particularly challenging for trauma centers. 51% of all JHHS firearm injury patients required critical care services. 16% died of their injuries. The average injury severity score (ISS) for a firearm injury patient at JHH is 16.4. (An ISS over 15 represents Major Trauma.) The average hospital stay for a firearm injury patient is five days, and some patients in the last five years have had hospital stays of over 150 days; over 50 patients had greater than 30-day lengths of stay.

## **Government and Community Affairs**

### **There are Significant Costs Associated with Operating a Trauma Center**

A hospital's commitment to being a trauma center requires significant resource allocation. These costs are associated with ensuring that patients have access to trauma surgeons, specialty services, and the necessary equipment and facilities to deliver high-quality care to injured patients.

With that in mind, during the 2003 Legislative Session, the Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation that created the Fund to aid Maryland's trauma system by reimbursing trauma physicians for uncompensated care losses and by raising Medicaid payments to 100% of the Medicare rate when a Medicaid patient receives trauma care at a designated trauma center. In the intervening 20 years, a comprehensive review of the Maryland Trauma System and Fund has not occurred even as the needs of the system have grown and evolved. As a result, a Trauma Fund designed to reimburse 65% of on-call trauma in 2003 – today reimburses just 40% of on-call trauma.

The Maryland General Assembly created the Commission to Study Trauma Center Funding in Maryland to study this issue and make recommendations. Throughout the Commission's meetings, the state's trauma centers demonstrated significant unmet financial need.

There have been several proposals for funding trauma care in Maryland, but due to the impact of firearm injuries, it is appropriate that the tax proposed by SB784 be one of them.

### **This Bill will Support Efforts to Address the Root Causes of Violence**

Johns Hopkins Hospital operates a successful hospital-based violence intervention program. This program is currently enabled by the American Rescue Plan. SB784 would allow more Maryland residents who are recovering from violent injuries to be served by our Hospital Violence intervention Programs. And the bill provides a means to advance important evidence-based gun violence prevention strategies and further research capabilities. JHH operates a multidisciplinary team that engages victims of shootings, stabbings, and violent assaults with a goal to prevent recurrent injury and support healing and growth moving forward. The program has been successful: of 130 program participants, only 3% returned to a Maryland hospital with a new firearm injury within 12-months of follow-up.

Accordingly, Johns Hopkins respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on **SB 784**.

# **SB 784 - Elfreth Testimony - Updated.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Elfreth

Position: FAV

SENATOR SARAH ELFRETH  
*Legislative District 30*  
Anne Arundel County



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Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Capital Budget

Pensions

Chair, Public Safety,  
Transportation, and Environment

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and  
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area

Chair, Joint Subcommittee on  
Program Open Space/Agricultural  
Land Preservation

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 14, 2024

**Testimony in Favor of SB 784**  
**Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

Chairman Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 784 which will establish an excise tax on dealers of guns and ammunition, the revenue from which will fund Maryland's world-class Trauma Centers, violence intervention programs, and gun violence research.

Throughout 2023, I served as the Senate representative on the Commission to Study Trauma Funding. Alongside my House counterpart Delegate Emily Shetty, I partnered with trauma physicians from across Maryland to examine the current funding formula which provides funding to Trauma Centers, identify gaps and needs, and craft a report for the General Assembly with recommended updates. As a result of these discussions, we learned that Trauma Centers are facing a significant funding deficit in the coming years, requiring an adjustment to the Fund to ensure continuity of services.

Currently, the Fund generates revenue by receiving a portion of vehicle registration fees. At the time of the establishment of the Fund formula in 2014, vehicular accidents were overwhelmingly the leading cause of trauma services in Maryland. In the 10 years since the formula was established, the University of Maryland Medical System Shock Trauma Center reports that the number of patients they treat with gunshot wounds has doubled, rising from 4.9% in 2013 to 10% in 2023. Research indicates that these numbers statewide may be even greater; Everytown reported that the rate of gun deaths in Maryland increased 54% from 2012 to 2021 compared to the national increase rate of 39%<sup>1</sup>. On average, someone is killed with a gun every 12 hours in Maryland, averaging 12.4 gun deaths per 100,000 residents and making Maryland the 30th highest gun death rate in the nation<sup>2</sup>

**Maryland is enduring an epidemic of gun violence, and Marylanders are footing the bill.** A 2018 study by the Giffords Law Center found that gun violence in Maryland results in a direct measurable cost of over \$1.3 billion per

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<sup>1</sup> <https://everystat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Gun-Violence-in-Maryland-2.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-violence-statistics/>

year, \$294 million of which is funded entirely by taxpayer dollars. When indirect costs impacting communities is considered, Maryland sees an estimated loss of \$3.6 billion per year due to gun violence<sup>3</sup>.

These costs are further exacerbated in Trauma Centers because the complex nature of treating gunshot wounds requires multiple medical specialties needed immediately to treat patients. Throughout the Commission's meetings, physicians explained that Trauma Centers must have doctors and specialists on standby in the hospital in order to act quickly in treating emergent patients. This means that this team of doctors must be paid to be on site at Trauma Centers, a cost greater than on-call physicians which are off campus, but prepared to come to the hospital on short notice. Gunshot victims do not have the luxury of time to wait for a medical team to arrive at the hospital, and as a result, Trauma Centers experience higher standby costs than typical hospitals.

With the rise in gun-related crime comes an increased need for proactive solutions. Governor Moore recently established the Maryland Center for Firearm Prevention and Intervention, the only such center in any state nationwide. Maryland's Violence Intervention and Prevention Program provides proactive, community-centered programming to stop gun violence before it starts. The Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program offers financial support to the families of victims of homicide as they navigate the unexpected and endure the unbearable. As incidents of gun violence increase, these programs become in higher demand and encounter capacity and funding challenges that impede on their ability to serve the influx of Marylanders in need of support.

Senate Bill 784, the Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act, will ensure that the proactive and responsive solutions to gun violence are paid for by the gun and ammunition industry. SB 784 establishes an excise tax of 11% on the gross profits of gun and ammunition dealers. To be clear - this is not a sales tax on Marylanders purchasing guns and ammunition. It does not inhibit or prohibit Marylanders from purchasing guns and ammunition.

**The language of SB 784 very intentionally puts the responsibility of this tax squarely on the shoulders of gun and ammunition dealers, whose profits are not constitutionally protected. Maryland taxpayers have been carrying the burden of paying for the gun violence epidemic themselves, and it is long overdue for the industry itself to contribute to the solution.**

The Fiscal Note for SB 784 indicates that this excise tax will generate \$18.7 million in annual revenue in FY26, increasing to \$24.3 million annually by FY29, all of which will be directed toward proactive and responsive solutions to gun violence in Maryland. SB 784 establishes a waterfall structure for funding, with programs funded at specific percentages of the total revenue amount in order by priority. Beneficiaries of this funding include:

- 44% to the Maryland Trauma Physicians Services Fund.
- 29% to the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical System.
- 23% to the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program within the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention.
- 2% to the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program within the Governor's Office of Crime and Prevention and Policy.
- 2% to the proposed Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention, which would operate within the state Department of Health.

The largest portion of funding goes toward trauma centers to support the life-saving care they provide to victims of gun violence in the immediate aftermath. Each of the subsequent programs provide critical services to Maryland communities as they take action to prevent gun violence and heal in the aftermath of experiencing this violence. Collectively, this group of recipients represent Maryland's holistic approach to combating gun violence, ensuring

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<sup>3</sup> <https://giffords.org/press-release/2018/02/md-gv/>

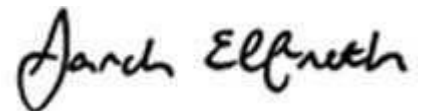
immediate and comprehensive support to Marylanders on the worst days while simultaneously taking action within communities to prevent incidents of gun violence from occurring.

You will no doubt hear arguments today that responsible gun owners should not have to pay for the prevention or the aftermath of gun violence. But I humbly ask you to consider our original mechanism for funding both the University of Maryland Medical System Shock Trauma Center and the Trauma Physicians Fund. Not every driver will cause or be the victim of a traffic accident. But every driver is at risk of doing so - and, thankfully, every driver has a greater chance of surviving that accident because of Maryland's life-saving trauma system that their registration fees helped to fund.

My neighbors and constituents in District 30 have experienced the horrors of gun violence far too frequently, from the mass murder of journalists at the Capital Gazette to the sound of shots fired down the block from their homes on a near weekly basis. As their representative, it is my duty to ensure that we as a State are doing everything in our power to protect and support constituents from this ever growing danger. SB 784 is Maryland's opportunity to take decisive action by holding the gun and ammunition industry accountable for their role in this epidemic and ensuring a fair share of their profits meaningfully address the violence caused by their products.

I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 784.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Elfreth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Sarah Elfreth  
District 30



# **2024 Legislation -(SB 784- Comprehensive Community**

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: FAV



**2024 SESSION**  
**POSITION PAPER**

**BILL NO:** SB 784  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation Committee  
**POSITION:** Support  
**TITLE:** Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

**BILL ANALYSIS**

*SB 784- Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act* establishes an 11 percent excise tax on sales of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition. The bill sets out the requirements, the amount of, how and when the excise tax will be collected. Additionally, the bill specifies that a certain percentage of the excise tax revenue is to be disbursed to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program, and the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE**

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) supports *SB 784* and believes that firearm injuries and deaths continue to be a cost to health care systems and a major public health problem. Firearm deaths and injuries cost Maryland \$10.5 billion each year, of which \$384 million is paid by taxpayers.<sup>1</sup> In Maryland, 35 percent of gun deaths are suicides and 63% are homicides. By comparison in the US, 57 percent of gun deaths are suicides and 40% are homicides.

In Maryland, the MIEMSS Trauma Registry and HSCRC Hospital data sets show that approximately 1,700 gunshot victims were admitted to Maryland trauma centers in 2022-23. Another 370 patients were admitted to Maryland acute care hospitals that did not have a trauma center.<sup>2</sup> According to MIEMSS data, over 85 percent of the firearm injuries that trigger a trauma center admission occur among adolescents and adults between the age of 15-44, with almost all the remaining victims in the 45-64 age group.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> EveryStat.org, Gun Violence in Maryland, May 2023, accessed at <https://everystat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Gun-Violence-in-Maryland-2.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> HSCRC and MHCC analysis of HSCRC hospital discharge data for CY 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, 2022-203 Annual Report, accessed at <https://www.miemss.org/home/Portals/0/Docs/AnnualReports/Annual-Report-2023.pdf>

The costs of firearm injuries are high even compared to other types of trauma. RACSTC the average inpatient hospitalization averaged \$76,293, while a patient with a firearm injury costs \$104,619. These costs only capture the facility charges for the initial trauma visit. Subsequent hospital admission at community hospitals, inpatient and outpatient treatment, physician charges, and outpatient pharmacy costs are not included in the costs. Nor are the lifelong costs of a firearm injury that often imposes additional psychological injuries and may limit the ability to work and support oneself and loved ones.

Johns Hopkins Adult Trauma Center and the University of Maryland (UM) Capital Region Medical Center also treat significant numbers of firearm injuries. UM Capital Region Medical Center's expertise in treating these injuries has grown in the last several years with the opening of the new medical center. All but the most serious firearm injuries are now treated at that trauma center rather than being transferred to RACSTC. The reality that multiple trauma centers have needed to develop capabilities in the treatment of severe firearm injury is one testament to the scope of the firearm injury challenge. It is appropriate that this legislation directs 44 percent of the revenue from excise tax (net of the Comptroller's administrative costs) to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, a fund that benefits all Maryland trauma centers.

*SB 784* would apply an 11 percent excise tax on firearms, accessories, and ammunition. The principle of assessing a small charge on the mechanism causing a trauma injury is well established in Maryland. Automobile registrations and registration renewals in Maryland are subject to a surcharge. As the Maryland trauma system is under financial stress, generating revenue from the gun and related equipment sales is appropriate given firearms are the cause of some of the most costly trauma injuries.

The *Commission to Study Trauma Funding* considered additional sources of funding during its meetings in the fall of 2023. Raising the automobile registration surcharge, adding a trauma surcharge for moving automobile and DWI violations, and assessing excise taxes on guns and related equipment were all discussed. Commissioners recognized that additional revenue was needed and there was also broad support for applying an excise tax to gun and ammunition sales. Many Commission members observed that while a higher automobile surcharge would be needed, other mechanisms of trauma injury should also be assessed.

Firearms play a significant role in driving Maryland residents' trauma costs and on broader public health costs. For these reasons the MHCC asks for a favorable report on *SB 784*.



# **SB 784\_Comprehensive Community Safety Funding.pdf**

Uploaded by: Theodore Delbridge

Position: FAV



## **Senate Bill 784 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

### **MIEMSS Position: Support**

**Bill Summary: SB 784 creates an 11% excise tax for licensed firearms dealers on sales involving firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition. Revenues are to be distributed to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund (44%); the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical System (29%); the Violence Intervention & Prevention Program (23%); the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program (2%); and the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention & Intervention within the Maryland Department of Health (2%).**

### **Rationale:**

- Maryland's trauma centers provide expert care for critically injured patients, including those injured by firearms. Maryland's trauma centers – designated by MIEMSS – are the foundation of a system that is designed to optimize outcomes for people with complex, and often life-threatening injuries. Seriously injured patients may be initially transported to trauma centers or transferred to trauma centers from community hospitals after initial stabilization. As injuries can occur anytime day or night, trauma centers must maintain a constant state of readiness which requires considerable investments in personnel, equipment, and operations.
- Firearm-related injuries are among the most critical treated by trauma centers. In FY 2023, Maryland's trauma centers cared for more than 1500 firearm-related injured people. They had higher Injury Severity Scores than other mechanisms of injury (e.g., falls, and motor vehicle crashes). Subsequently, patients with firearm injuries are at increased risk of dying, even after arriving at a trauma center. These factors serve to underscore the importance of each trauma center's perpetual state of readiness to provide expert care, and the investments they make to do so.
- For more than 20 years, the Trauma Physicians Services Fund (Fund) has provided supplemental funding to help support some of the costs associated with the substantial financial commitment associated with trauma center designation. Fund revenue is provided by a \$2.50 per year (\$5 biennial) vehicle registration fee surcharge. Since its creation, however, revenues from the Fund have become insufficient to provide the support needed, and rules governing Fund distribution need modernization.
- SB 784 will provide much-needed revenue to the Fund from the sales of firearms, firearm accessories and ammunition. The additional revenue will help support trauma centers as they continue to provide life-saving treatment to seriously injured people.

### **MIEMSS Supports SB 784 and Asks for a Favorable Report**

**Art\_Novotny\_UNF\_SB0784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Art Novotny

Position: UNF

Testimony of Art Novotny in OPPOSITION to SB0784  
“Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act”

Now is not the time to tighten the taxation squeeze on Marylanders, for anything. The increased cost of fuel (and ripple effect onto groceries and just about any product needed to survive) is strangling all of us.

As an elected official, you are supposed to be smarter, or at least wiser, than me. Find a way to fund these programs with what you have. Don't take the easy way out and squeeze us subjects harder. If these programs are indeed important, you'll find a better way.

Honestly, I do not trust that this funding will not be another “shell game,” like the revenue from gambling being used for education. Sure, it makes it sound nice and easy to sell to the voters, but when the new revenue is used in place of (and not in addition to) existing funding, it really seems disingenuous.

Including “body armor” on the list of taxed items seems like a slap in the face to citizens who do not feel safe. Will this include the bullet resistant backpacks that are marketed to parents who fear for their child's safety at school?

While some states (such as West Virginia) have acknowledged the necessity of it's citizens' self defense in these financially difficult times and exempted firearms, ammunition, and accessories from sales tax, it is not surprising that Maryland, the FeeState, intends to increase them.

I ask for an unfavorable report.

Thank you,  
Art Novotny  
Aberdeen, MD.

# **SB 784 Excise Tax.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cathy Wright

Position: UNF





**SB 784**  
**Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

***UNFAVORABLE***

The Maryland State Rifle & Pistol Association (MSRPA) opposes SB 784 the Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act.

The MSRPA is the official National Rifle Association state organization for Maryland. The MSRPA's mission is to defend our rights in Maryland, support training in firearm safety and shooting skills through its affiliated clubs, and sponsor and sanction local competition throughout the state.

This bill would raise additional taxes on firearm and ammunition manufacturers and dealers to fund the state's trauma systems. The Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund is maintained through a \$5 surcharge on car registration renewals. It covers costs for uncompensated care, Medicaid-enrolled patients, and trauma related expenses and equipment grants. Income from vehicle registration fees, grants and reserves have subsidized the fund and will preserve the trauma system, but not for more than a few more years. The Maryland Health Care Commission recommended that the registration fee be raised to \$6, the better to support the network, as fees have not been raised since the early 2000s. However, Senator Elfreth has instead decided that lawful gun owners and the companies that make and sell the products those gun owners buy should be taxed even more.

There are problems with this proposal, including:

- We don't tax any other constitutional rights. This bill would infringe on law-abiding citizens' rights and abilities to self-defense, while doing little to address violent crime.
- Maryland has few firearm or ammunition manufacturers in the state, so how will the excise tax raise the estimated \$13 million additional funds needed, if there aren't a lot of companies to tax in the first place?
- Why should the average citizen be concerned about raising taxes on companies? The dirty little secret is that a tax on businesses is a tax on customers. Companies will not eat the costs of additional taxes, because they always pass them on to customers.
- At a press conference on January 17<sup>th</sup> Delegate Bernice Mireku-North (Montgomery) stated that the taxes would "come from firearms associated with mass shootings, which burden the state's trauma systems." Senator Sarah Elfreth (Anne Arundel) said the state's shock trauma center in Baltimore experienced an increase of patients of gunshot wounds from 5% in 2013 to 10% last year. So, it appears that the law abiding, tax paying citizens of Maryland will once again, bear the burden of violent criminals who did not pay taxes on the guns and ammunition that were probably stolen in the first place.

**Page 2 MSRPA**

**SB 784**

**Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

Will Marylanders have to “bite the bullet” (pun intended) and refrain from further purchases of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition because of increased taxes? How will that contribute to Maryland’s tax base? Will Maryland businesses be able stay competitive with the companies making and selling firearms in neighboring states: Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, and West Virginia? This could cost people in Maryland their jobs, and they may have to move to more tax-friendly states. Are legislators Mireku-North and Elfreth considering the effects on medical care for the needy and Maryland’s economy, or is this really all about gun control?

The MSRPA respectfully requests an UNFAVORABLE report on SB 784.

Cathy S. Wright  
MSRPA VP Legislative Affairs  
[cwright@msrpa.org](mailto:cwright@msrpa.org)  
<https://www.msrpa.org>

# **Testimony SB784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Donna Worthy

Position: UNF

## Testimony for SB784

My name is Donna Worthy and I am the President of Maryland Firearms Dealers Association as well as the President of Worth-A-Shot Firearms in Millersville MD. I am testifying today with strong opposition to SB784.

This bill proposes as 11% excise tax on all firearms, all firearm accessories and ammunition. This is quite a large amount to add to a customers purchase. An average firearm costs \$500. If we added that 11% tax to a firearm purchase of \$500, we are adding \$55.00 to our customers costs. Dealers would be unable to cover this cost without adding it to the customers purchase total because dealer margins are quite low. Adding \$55.00 to a customers cost would cause customers to do one of two things. One, they would not purchase and not be able to exercise their rights or protect their family due to the cost. Or two, most customers would simply purchase in another state and transfer their purchase to MD, avoiding the 11% tax entirely. This would quite frankly put most brick and mortar firearm stores out of business in this state. This would absolutely not reduce firearms in MD, but instead would take revenue and jobs away from this state and give it to others. The \$55.00 is simply an average. This fee could be much higher on many purchases. A Firearm costing \$800 would add a tax amount of \$88.00. This is an excessive amount to add comparatively to alcohol, tobacco or even gasoline. The price to purchase those things is much lower impacting the customers far less than this tax would impact our customers.

This bill would also require record keeping of every single purchase that requires this tax be added. Does this mean we would now be required to obtain a customers information for a simple purchase of a magazine loader? That same customer could also easily go online and purchase that same magazine loader and avoid the 11% tax completely and have the item delivered to their doorstep.

This bill would be crippling to most Firearm stores in MD.

For these reasons I strongly oppose SB784.

Thank you for your time.

**SB0784 HB0935 2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Evette Harris

Position: UNF

13 FEB 2024

To: Maryland State Judiciary Committee

Re: HB0935/SB0784: Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act/11% Excise Tax

To wit: Request an UNFAVORABLE report

Senators & Delegates:

I am requesting an UNFAVORABLE report on HB0935/SB0784. This bill would unfairly, inequitably & discriminately impose an 11% excise tax on a specific industry simply because of the industry & the industry's proponents.

Legal gun owners, Retail gun shops & FFLs are legitimate, legal businesses in Maryland & in our country. Businesses cannot & must not be subjected to the likes or dislikes of the elected & appointed bureaucrats' preferences or viewpoints of such businesses. Legal gun owners & retail gun shops are NOT the cause of violent crimes committed by violent people who illegally use firearms.

Prosecute the criminals & stop prosecuting legal gun owners for crimes they don't commit.

Fervently,

Evie Harris

Firearms Instructor

Baltimore, Maryland

**SB0784 HB0935 2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Evette Harris

Position: UNF

13 FEB 2024

To: Maryland State Ways & Means Committee

Re: HB0935/SB0784: Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act/11% Excise Tax

To wit: Request an UNFAVORABLE report

Senators & Delegates:

I am requesting an UNFAVORABLE report on HB0935/SB0784. This bill would unfairly, inequitably & discriminately impose an 11% excise tax on a specific industry simply because of the industry & the industry's proponents.

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Prosecute the criminals & stop prosecuting legal gun owners for crimes they don't commit.

Fervently,

Evie Harris

Firearms Instructor

Baltimore, Maryland



**SB0784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Galen Muhammad

Position: UNF

## **SB0784**

I stand opposed to this legislation as the addition of an excise tax will ultimately be passed along to the consumer. This bill is intended to discourage law abiding citizens from purchasing firearms and accessories, but this would have a detrimental impact on safety.

Legal firearms owners make financial decisions of how many times they visit the range to practice their firearms skills. While many in law enforcement only practice their firearms skills when mandated (once per year), those outside of law enforcement may visit the range as seldom as twice a month, every month. Increasing the costs of firearms and accessories on the front end would make it financially harder for non-law enforcement firearms owners to put in the necessary skills practice to remain proficient.

I ask that this bill receives an unfavorable review.

# **NSSF McGuigan MD Testimony Re Ammo Tax SB 784 Oppo**

Uploaded by: Jake McGuigan

Position: UNF



**JAKE MCGUIGAN**

Managing Director, Gov't Relations - State Affairs

jmcguigan@nssf.org | 203-426-1320 x238 | nssf.org

400 N. Capitol Street NW, Suite 475, Washington, D.C. 20001

February 14, 2024

**Position: Opposed**

Senator Guy Guzzone  
Chair  
Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: SB 784 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act (Excise Tax)**

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

The National Shooting Sports Foundation ("NSSF") is the trade association for America's firearms, ammunition, hunting, and recreational shooting sports industry. Its mission is to promote, protect and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. NSSF has a membership of more than 10,000 manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, and sportsmen's organizations. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Maryland sportsmen, the U.S. military and law enforcement agencies throughout the state. This is to notify you of our strong opposition to SB 784.

In the wake of continued efforts to enact new burdens on gun ownership, lawmakers in some states and localities are now seeking a back-door approach to gun control through the use of taxes. Supporters of restricting citizens' Second Amendment rights see no problem implementing a "poll tax" on the right to bear arms. What these proposals ignore is the fact that beyond the dangerous concept of pricing citizens out of a constitutional right, levying new taxes on the purchase of firearms, ammunition, and accessories poses significant negative consequences for law-abiding citizens and for the taxing jurisdictions themselves.

- **New taxes on the purchase of firearms and ammunition are unconstitutional "poll taxes."**
- **Unlike law-abiding citizens, criminals do not legally purchase guns and will not be affected.**
- **Raising taxes puts a jurisdiction at a competitive disadvantage and hurts legitimate businesses.**

Anti-gun advocates are quick to compare such tax proposals to taxes on cigarettes and other so-called "sin taxes." However, unlike cigarettes or other commercial products, owning a firearm is a constitutional right. A more apt comparison to levying an additional tax on firearms is the Jim Crow-era practice of restricting citizens' right to vote by imposing "poll taxes." Both would force law-abiding citizens to pay for exercising a constitutional right. Current law already imposes restrictions on gun ownership, like banning ownership by felons or the mentally ill. But these restrictions are not based on ability to pay. Setting conditions on the Second Amendment based on socioeconomic status sets a dangerous precedent for all Americans.

**Taxing Jurisdiction Loses**

States and localities seeking to levy these new taxes will also put themselves at a competitive disadvantage compared to their neighboring states. *In many cases, residents of the taxing area will be able to go to a business in another jurisdiction to purchase ammunition, accessories and even certain long guns, taking not only the "excise" tax revenue away, but also depressing the sales tax revenue paid by the law-abiding businesses in the jurisdiction.* This double hit on the taxing jurisdictions fiscal condition explains why some states have taken the opposite tact and established Second Amendment tax-free holidays to spur economic activity, not hamper it. States

themselves stand to lose from a decrease in the federal Pittman-Robertson excise tax revenue already paid on the sale of firearms and ammunition and dedicated to wildlife conservation efforts.

### **Pittman-Robertson Excise Tax (A Tax We Support)**

In the early 1900s, when many wildlife species were dwindling in numbers or disappearing, the firearms and ammunition industry stepped forward and asked Congress to impose an excise tax on the sale of firearms and ammunition products to help fund wildlife conservation in the United States. The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act (PR)) became law in 1937. The revenue generated from the excise tax is apportioned to state wildlife agencies for conservation efforts, hunter's education and shooting projects and programs.

Since the program's inception, \$12.5 billion has been collected from manufacturers and awarded to states through PR making the firearms and ammunition industry America's largest contributor to conservation and access. Over the past 75 years, PR revenue has helped to rebuild the population of numerous species and extend their ranges farther than they were in the 1930s. In fiscal year 2022 Maryland received nearly \$11 million in PR wildlife restoration funds with over \$4.5 million being used for wildlife restoration throughout the state. Since inception Maryland has received over \$100 million in excise tax revenue.

### **Strong Industry for the State of Maryland**

The firearm industry has contributed close to \$1 billion in economic activity to Maryland in 2022 and employs over 4,200 people in the state. While Maryland faces difficult budget choices, the firearms industry is still one of the few industries that has continued to contribute increased tax revenues to the state (to the tune of \$14 million).

An additional excise tax would result in the loss of jobs in Maryland, similar to what we have seen in other municipalities nationally, major losses of sales revenue to Maryland businesses and, as a result, the loss of substantial tax revenue for the state.

### **Taxes Will Not Stop Criminals**

Surveys conducted by the federal government show that criminals overwhelmingly gain access to firearms illegally through the black market or theft or obtain firearms from family and friends. Imposing a new tax on firearms and ammunition will have zero impact on their behavior. In fact, areas with largest increases in gun ownership also have the largest drops in violent crime. This raises the question of whether states and localities should instead seek tax rebates for gun ownership as a method of crime reduction, rather than a tax to discourage the purchase of firearms.

### **Proposals Disguise the Real Debate**

In addition to being poor policy, the proposed state excise tax is nothing more than an underhanded method of enacting more gun control policies. The result of such a policy in the form of a tax code change will have an adverse impact on firearms safety education and hunting throughout the state. Fortunately, NSSF leads the way in advocating for the industry and its businesses and jobs, keeping guns out of the wrong hands, encouraging enjoyment of recreational shooting and hunting, and helping people better understand the industry's lawful products. Tax proposals, such as the one before you, will only impact federally licensed dealers along with licensed residents with no increase to public safety.

We must all work together to help prevent those who exhibit reckless disregard for human life and values access to firearms for criminal purposes. But we must also preserve the constitutional rights of tens of millions

of law-abiding Americans to safely and responsibly own, store and use firearms for personal protection, hunting and recreation.

America's firearms industry welcomes the opportunity to be a part of a respectful and constructive dialogue on this important topic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jake McGuigan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jake McGuigan  
Managing Director State Affairs

# **NSSF**<sup>®</sup> *The Firearm Industry Trade Association*

## **REAL SOLUTIONS SAFER COMMUNITIES**

The firearms industry welcomes participation in the national conversation to make our communities safer. Our trade association, **THE NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION**<sup>®</sup>, has long advocated for effective solutions to prevent access to firearms by criminals, children and the dangerously mentally ill.

We run programs that make a real difference.



NSSF has led the way in improving the FBI National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) through our **FixNICS**<sup>®</sup> Initiative that has reformed the law in 16 states and improved the reporting of disqualifying records.



**The Don't Lie for the Other Guy**<sup>™</sup> program helps firearms retailers prevent illegal straw purchases and is conducted in cooperation with Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).



**Project ChildSafe**<sup>®</sup> has distributed more than 37 million free gun locks since 1999.



Our partnerships with federal and state agencies, as well as a leading national **suicide prevention** organization, are building public education resources for firearms retailers, shooting ranges and the firearms-owning community.



**Operation Secure Store**<sup>®</sup> is a comprehensive joint initiative with ATF to help Federal Firearms Licensees make well-informed security-related decisions to deter and prevent thefts.

**Real solutions that protect lives and preserve our citizens' liberties – making our communities safer.**

## Seattle's Failed Firearms and Ammunition Tax

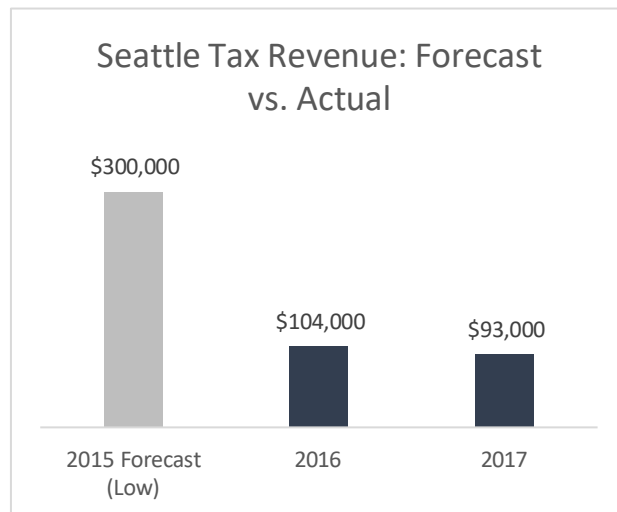
In 2015, Seattle's City Council enacted a tax of \$25 per firearm and 2-5 cents per round of ammunition.

Retail sale of firearms	Tax rate
Each firearm sold at retail	\$25
Retail sale of ammunition	Tax rate per round
.22 caliber or less sold at retail	\$0.02
All other ammunition sold at retail	\$0.05

### Revenue Impact

When the tax was adopted in 2015, then-Councilmember Tim Burgess said the city projected the tax would raise \$300,000 to \$500,000 a year.

Taking the lower end of the forecast range, revenue has come in at less than a third of the estimate.



The city collected \$104,000 in 2016, when the law took effect.

In 2017, the revenue dropped by another 11 percent to \$93,000. That year, the tax was paid on 1,929 firearms and about 1.1 million rounds of ammo, according to the Department of Finance and Administrative Services.

Meanwhile, the tax drove businesses and jobs out of the city. When the law was enacted, Seattle had 40 FFLs. As of November 2018, there were only 27.

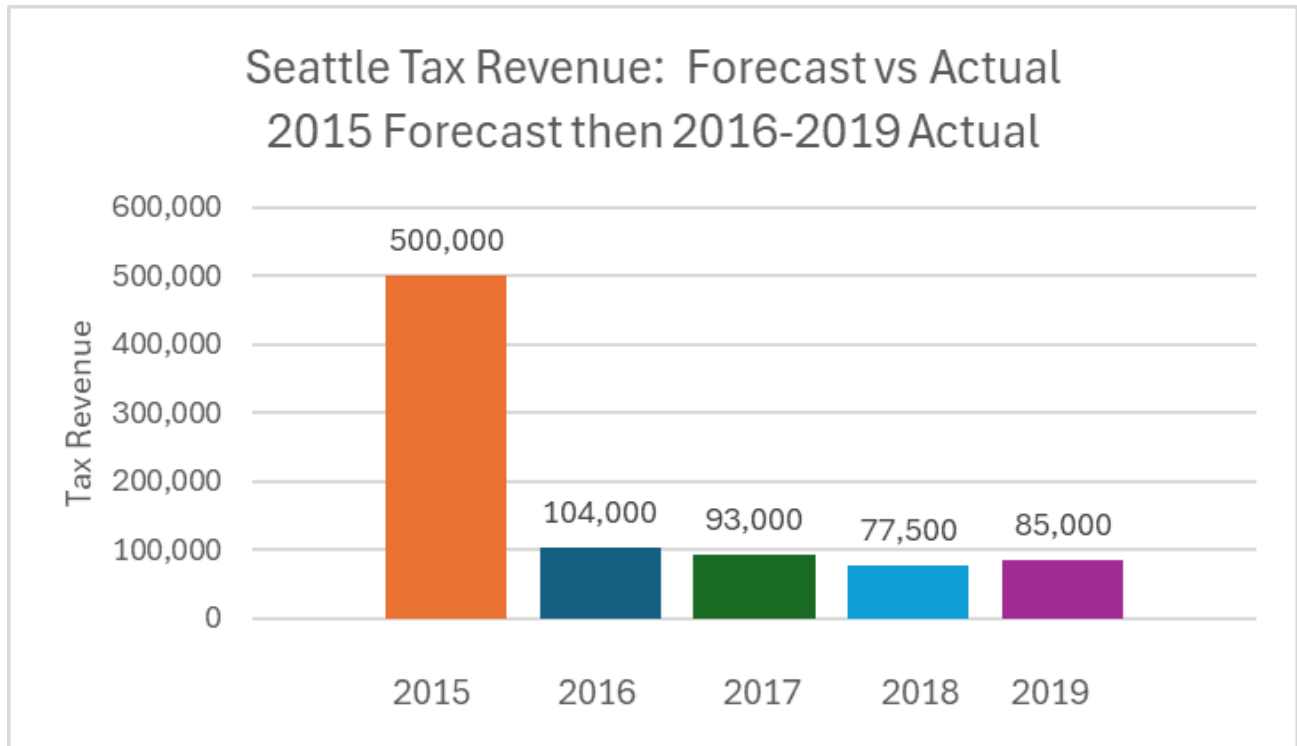
### Violent Crime Impact

Despite falling 70% short of the revenue forecast, and driving out 13 businesses, the tax has also not had an impact on firearm-related crimes in the city.

According to the Seattle Police Department's crime data, crimes involving firearms rose by 7 percent from 2015 to 2018.

Crime Category	2015	2018
Homicide	16	16
Rape	6	13
Robbery	270	266
Aggravated Assault	218	249
Total	510	544





# **SB 784 - Wink's Sporting Goods - Opposition.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jamie Wink

Position: UNF

Jamie Wink  
Wink's Sporting Goods  
12122A Carol Lane  
Princess Anne, MD 21853  
410-621-0400  
Gwink222@aol.com

I am writing in strong opposition to SB 784, which proposes an 11% tax on guns and ammunition. As a constituent, a hunter and a Business owner that will be negatively impacted by this bill, I feel compelled to voice how this legislation, though perhaps well-intentioned, will disproportionately affect traditional hunters like myself and have far-reaching negative implications for our community.

First and foremost, hunting is not merely a hobby or sport for many of us; it is a way of life that has been passed down through generations. It is deeply woven into the fabric of our community, contributing to our cultural heritage, conservation efforts, and local economies. The proposed tax increase threatens to undermine this tradition by placing an undue financial burden on responsible hunters who rely on access to affordable equipment to sustain their way of life.

The financial implications of this tax are particularly concerning for hunters, many of whom are not pursuing game for trophies but for sustenance and management of wildlife populations. Especially in Somerset County, which has the lowest median household income, the additional cost could significantly limit access to hunting for lower and middle-income families, for whom the price increase on guns and ammunition could be prohibitive. This could lead to a decline in hunting participation, negatively affecting wildlife conservation funding since much of it is supported by the revenue from hunting licenses and related equipment purchases.

Moreover, the proposed tax could inadvertently encourage hunters to seek out cheaper, potentially less safe alternatives for equipment, compromising safety standards in our community. The focus should remain on promoting responsible gun ownership and use, rather than imposing financial penalties that could have unintended negative consequences.

Also, I am uniquely impacted by this bill, being the owner of a business that is directly associated with hunting. The majority of my business revolves around hunting. This bill would greatly reduce my sales and would impact the five families that support their families through our hunting business. In Maryland there are not many places that are far from a bordering state, this bill would drive customers to neighboring states for their firearms, ammo and other hunting equipment. This not only would hurt my business, but many other businesses like mine, as well as cut down on sales tax revenues for the state. In small communities like ours, hunting is huge to our local economies through out-of-town hunters, and this tax will only place an extra financial burden on hunters which would in turn affect our local economy.

I understand and share the concerns about crime, the different types of violence and the need for measures to address this issue. However, targeting traditional hunters with this tax does not effectively address the root causes of crime and violence. Instead, I urge you to consider alternative approaches that target the actual sources of gun violence without unfairly penalizing law-abiding citizens who are practicing their traditional and legal activities.

In closing, I respectfully request that you oppose the proposed 11% tax on guns and ammunition. I believe that by working together, we can find balanced solutions that ensure public safety while preserving our cherished hunting traditions and the economic benefits they bring to our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my views on SB 784 and urge an unfavorable report in order to protect traditional hunting practices and small business in this great state of Maryland.

# **SB 784\_Testimony\_2A\_Maryland.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Josselyn

Position: UNF



**Senate Bill 784**  
**Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**  
**UNFAVORABLE**

In concept Senate Bill 784 is a clone of California Assembly Bill 28, which imposed an 11% tax that applies to gross receipts from retail sales of ammunition, firearms, accessories and parts and was signed into law on September 26, 2023, by Governor Gavin Newsom.

A “Fact Sheet” published by a proponent of Senate Bill 784 claims the proposed 11% excise tax is: “... *akin to the federal Pittman-Robertson tax, applies to gross receipts from firearm sales, certain related parts, and ammunition. It targets industry profits, not consumers.*” This statement is misleading.

*“The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson) provides funding for states and territories to support wildlife restoration, conservation, and hunter education and safety programs. Funding for Pittman-Robertson programs comes from federal excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. Among other purposes, the funds may be used to provide public access to wildlife resources; to acquire, restore, and manage wildlife areas; to conduct research on managing wildlife and its habitat; to facilitate public access for hunting or other wildlife-oriented recreation; and to maintain completed wildlife-restoration projects” .(Source: Congressional Research Service)*

The funds generated by hunters, shooters, sportsmen and sportswomen benefit all of Maryland’s citizens, even those who do not own or use firearms and have thus never contributed any tax money to the fund.

The “Talking Points” provided by the same organization are only slightly more forthright: *“It is not a sales tax on consumers, although it is possible dealers will, in their discretion, choose to pass along some or all of the tax amount to their customers.”*

Dealers are not enjoying the profit margins the proponents seem to believe. The cost of the proposed 11% excise tax will increase the cost of doing business and that increase will be paid by the targeted consumers.

Senate Bill 784  
Unfavorable

This tax is regressive in nature and will have a disproportional impact on those of lesser financial means.

The increased costs will have a cascading negative impact on the State's economy. State income from sales tax, corporate income tax, and personal income tax will see a decline as consumers purchase out of state and by mail order to avoid the proposed punitive excise tax. Some businesses will close, jobs will be lost, businesses such as lodging, restaurants, clothing stores etc., that benefit from revenue relating to hunting and the shooting sports will see a decline in income.

Federal funds from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act are based upon the number of hunting licenses and the land area of each state. The excise tax will discourage low-income citizens from hunting due to the increased cost involved. This will reduce the number of hunting licenses sold and consequently a corresponding reduction in the Federal funds received.

Maryland legislators should be wary about following California's lead. Recent reports indicate that California leads the nation in the number of citizens fleeing to states with more freedom and lower taxes.

We respectfully request an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 784.

John H. Josselyn  
2A Maryland  
2/14/2024

# **SB 0784 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

Uploaded by: Karla Mooney

Position: UNF



## SB 0784 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

Karla Mooney  
21175 Marigold St  
Leonardtown MD 20650  
Resident of St. Mary' County Dist. 29C

I am State Director of The DC Project-Women for Gun Rights and the State Leader of the Armed Women of America. I stand in solidarity with the Ladies of both groups, numbering many more than just myself. I am also a professional Multi-disciplined Firearms Instructor and Maryland QHIC.

As I read this bill, I see a tax on our 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Right. You cannot tax a right to every citizen. Even more important you are asking your law abiding citizens to pay for the illegal activities of others, and of citizens of the state to pay for medical services at 2 trauma centers, and for a task force that will certainly not accomplish what it is set out to do.

The Federal Firearms Dealers will have to add the increase in tax to every sale, that is a pole tax on our right to keep and bear arms. It will surly send firearms sales and ammunition sales over to Virginia and Pennsylvania and West Virginia where the items will not be taxed. It will not help the State gain income to fund its Task force or assist the Shock trauma centers, by and large it will reduce the amount purchased in the state. Maybe that is what your real intent is?

Taxing the law abiding will not stop or reduce them from be law abiding. Criminals will not care that you changed any law – because they do not follow the law. They will continue to do what they do not matter what task force you appoint. Please do not waste taxpayer money on this task force.

With Maryland no longer being able to budget our funds you think taxing our 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment will pay for your short falls, I must disagree, and ask for an unfavorable report on this bill.

**Katie\_Novotny\_UnFAV\_SB784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Katie Novotny

Position: UNF

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF KATIE NOVOTNY IN OPPOSITION OF  
SB784

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February 23, 2024

I am a gun owner, advocate for the right to self-defense, certified range safety officer, and a competitor in firearms competition. I oppose SB784.

This bill imposes an 11% excise tax on dealers for the sale of firearms, ammunition, and firearms accessories to fund a number of Funds the state provides money for. Based on interviews with various news outlets, the bill sponsor claims these are a tax on the dealers, not the consumer, but anyone who understands basic economics understands that these costs will be passed along to the consumer. Dealers simply cannot absorb these costs even if they wanted to.

The fiscal and policy note highlights this impact with \$22.4 million expected in revenue in FY26, with an increase of about 1 million every year. This is a huge tax on those who choose to purchase firearms and related items legally within this state. All to allegedly fund programs that pay for the cost of violent crime. This specifically punishes law abiding citizens who choose to exercise their second amendment right, by forcing them to specifically pay for the actions of others, as though they are complicit because they own firearms.

This will drive dealers out of business because in many instances, people will simply purchase from out of state, and in the case of handguns, then just have them transferred to a Maryland dealer to complete the 77r. Long guns, accessories, and ammunition may be purchased either online, or in person out of state, depending on the item. Of course those who wish to purchase firearms illegally off the streets and use them for crime, will continue to do so without paying this 11% tax.

This is a misguided attempt to fund resources that are not utilized because of the lawful sale of firearms, ammunition, and accessories to law abiding citizens. The state needs to find other ways to lower the violent crime rate rather than taxing citizens punitively.

Because of these reasons above, I request an unfavorable report.

Respectfully,

Katie Novotny

District 35A

[Katie.novotny@hotmail.com](mailto:Katie.novotny@hotmail.com)

443-617-7568

# **MSI Testimony on SB 784 and HB 935 final.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mark Pennak

Position: UNF



President  
Mark W. Pennak

February 14, 2023

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF MARK W. PENNAK, PRESIDENT, MSI, IN OPPOSITION TO SB 784 and HB 935**

I am the President of Maryland Shall Issue (“MSI”). Maryland Shall Issue is a Section 501(c)(4), all-volunteer, non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and advancement of gun owners’ rights in Maryland. It seeks to educate the community about the right of self-protection, the safe handling of firearms, and the responsibility that goes with carrying a firearm in public. I am also an attorney and an active member of the Bar of the District of Columbia and the Bar of Maryland. I recently retired from the United States Department of Justice, where I practiced law for 33 years in the Courts of Appeals of the United States and in the Supreme Court of the United States. I am an expert in Maryland Firearms Law, federal firearms law and the law of self-defense. I am also a Maryland State Police certified handgun instructor for the Maryland Wear and Carry Permit and the Maryland Handgun Qualification License and a certified NRA instructor in rifle, pistol, personal protection in the home, personal protection outside the home, muzzle loading, as well as a range safety officer. I appear today in opposition to SB 784 and HB 935 (collectively referred to herein as “the Bill” or “this Bill”).

### **The Bill:**

This Bill would create new provisions in the Tax-General Article of the Maryland Code to impose a new 11% FIREARM, FIREARM ACCESSORY, AND AMMUNITION EXCISE TAX on gross receipts. See Section 7.7-103. This tax would be levied on all federally licensed firearms dealers (“FFLs”) in the State and would be payable monthly. See Section 7-7-201. A failure to pay would result in personal liability for the tax on “any officer of the corporation who exercises direct control over its fiscal management.” Section 7.7-301. Proceeds of the tax would be distributed, after deducting administrative costs, in specified percentage amounts, to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund (44%), the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center At The University Of Maryland Medical System (29%), the Violence Intervention And Prevention Program Fund (23%) and in lesser amounts (2%) to two other State offices. Section 2-4B-02

### **THE BILL IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

The 11% exercise tax imposed by this Bill would be levied solely on FFLs. The Bill would be on top of the existing 6% Maryland sales tax and on top of Maryland’s 8.25% general corporate income tax. This additional excise tax on FFLs is unconstitutional because the sale of firearms and ammunition is inextricably bound up with the exercise of Second Amendment rights and the tax threatens the vital

role FFLs play in the exercise of the Second Amendment right to acquire firearms for lawful purposes.

Supreme Court precedent makes clear that a State may not single out persons and businesses for special taxes where such taxes could create even the possibility of unjustified burdens on the exercise of a constitutional right. In *Minneapolis Star and Tribune Co. v. Minnesota Com'r of Revenue*, 460 U.S. 575 (1983), the Court invalidated a special use tax levied by a state on the cost of paper and ink products consumed in production of newspapers and other periodical publishers because such a special tax threatened the First Amendment. In so holding, the Court reasoned that the state had “singled out the press for special treatment” and thus “burden[ed] rights protected by the First Amendment.” 460 U.S. at 582. Such a tax, the Court ruled, “cannot stand unless the burden is necessary to achieve an overriding governmental interest.” *Id.*

The State in *Minneapolis Star* failed to provide any such justification. As the Court stated, “[w]hatever the motive of the legislature . . . recognizing a power in the State not only to single out the press but also to tailor the [law] so that it singles out a few members of the press presents such a potential for abuse that no interest suggested by Minnesota can justify the scheme.” 460 U.S. at 591-92 (emphasis added). The Court reasoned that the “differential treatment, unless justified by some special characteristic of the press, suggests that the goal of the regulation is not unrelated to suppression of expression, and such a goal is presumptively unconstitutional.” *Id.* at 585. But the Court also made clear that “[i]llicit legislative intent is not the *sine qua non* of a violation of the First Amendment.” *Id.* at 592.

The holding in *Minneapolis Star* is clear: “[W]e cannot countenance such treatment unless the State asserts a counterbalancing interest **of compelling importance that it cannot achieve without differential taxation.**” *Id.* (emphasis added). In so holding, the Court specifically rejected the state’s professed need to raise revenue, noting that the State could raise the revenue by “taxing businesses generally, avoiding the censorial threat implicit in a tax that singles out the press.” *Id.* at 586. Rather, the constitutional flaw was “the very selection of the press for special treatment [because that] threatens the press not only with the current differential treatment, but with the possibility of subsequent differentially *more burdensome treatment.*” *Id.* at 588. See also *Arkansas Writers' Project, Inc. v. Ragland*, 481 U.S. 221 (1987) (holding that taxing general interest magazines but exempting newspapers and religious, professional, trade and sports journals violated the First Amendment); *Simon & Schuster, Inc. v. Members of New York State Crime Victims*, 502 U.S. 105, 117 (1991) (holding that New York’s “Son of Sam” tax on sales of books authored by criminals was unconstitutional and rejecting the argument “that discriminatory financial treatment is suspect under the First Amendment only when the legislature intends to suppress certain ideas”).

The principles enunciated in *Minneapolis Star* apply to Second Amendment rights. The Supreme Court has repeatedly held that Second Amendment rights are not “a second-class right, subject to an entirely different body of rules than the other Bill of Rights guarantees.” *NYSRPA v. Bruen*, 597 U.S. 1, 70 (2022), quoting *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, 742, 780 (2010) (plurality opinion). Thus, the State may no more

burden Second Amendment rights with special taxes than it may burden First Amendment rights with the special tax at issue in *Minneapolis Star*. There is nothing special about the Trauma Physician Fund or the University of Maryland Trauma Center that would justify a special tax on firearms and ammunition sales under the test used in *Minneapolis Star*. The fiscal needs of such locations are no doubt important, but those needs can be met by general taxes.

Here, as in *Minneapolis Star*, the Bill would impose a special tax, ostensibly to raise funds for government offices and governmental functions specified in the Bill. That need for money is no different than the need for revenue rejected in *Minneapolis Star*. As the Court explained, “the very selection of the press for special treatment” is what “threatens the press” unconstitutionally. *Minneapolis Star*, 460 U.S. at 588 (emphasis the Court’s). Indeed, the Court rejected the State’s argument that the special tax did not really burden newspapers, stressing that the differential treatment was **alone** enough to invalidate the tax without any inquiry into actual burden. The Court explained that “courts have little familiarity with the process of evaluating the relative economic burden of taxes” and thus “the possibility of error inherent in the proposed rule poses too great a threat to concerns at the heart of the First Amendment.” *Id.* at 590. Here, this special tax on dealers does not merely threaten “more burdensome treatment” as in *Minneapolis Star*, *Id.*, at 588, it **actually** inflicts more burdensome treatment as only dealers are liable for an 11% tax. Indeed, “subsequent” legislation could easily increase the 11% rate on gross receipts to ever higher rates over time. The Bill “singles out” dealers for special treatment and that is enough to make it inherently suspect. See *Leathers v. Medlock*, 499 U.S. 439, 446-47 (1991) (discussing *Minneapolis Star*).

There is no doubt that FFLs are essential to rights protected by the Second Amendment. Federal and Maryland State law tightly constrain where and by whom firearms may be acquired in Maryland. Nearly all firearms are acquired by law-abiding persons through sales conducted by FFLs. Those sales are constitutionally protected because the right to “keep and bear Arms” implies the right to acquire arms for those purposes. That point has never been disputed by the State in litigation. See *MSI v. Moore*, 86 F.4th 1038, 1043 (4th Cir. 2023), *rehearing granted*, 2024 WL 124290 (4th Cir. Jan. 11, 2024). Specifically, under *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008), *McDonald* and *Bruen*, the Second Amendment protects the right of a law-abiding citizen to acquire firearms. See *Ezell v. City of Chicago*, 651 F.3d 684, 704 (7th Cir. 2011). That right to acquire a firearm has already been recognized in Maryland in the HQL litigation. See *MSI v. Hogan*, 566 F.Supp. 3d. 404, 424 (D.Md. 2021) (“The requirements for the purchase of a handgun, as set out in the HQL law, undoubtedly burden this core Second Amendment right because they ‘make it considerably more difficult for a person lawfully to acquire and keep a firearm ... for the purpose of self-defense in the home.’”), quoting *Heller v. District of Columbia*, 670 F.3d 1244,1255 (D.C. Cir. 2011).

Firearm dealers also have an “ancillary” Second Amendment right to sell firearms to law-abiding citizens. See, e.g., *Teixeira v. County of Alameda*, 873 F.3d 670, 676-78 (9th Cir. 2017) (en banc), *cert. denied*, 138 S.Ct. 1988 (2018). Under this precedent, any law that “meaningfully constrain[s]” a customer from having



“access” to a dealer is actionable under the Second Amendment. *Id.*, 873 F.3d at 680. See also *Maryland Shall Issue, Inc. v. Hogan*, 971 F.3d 199, 216 (4th Cir. 2020) (holding that a firearms dealer had Second Amendment standing to challenge Maryland’s HQL statute and may sue on its own behalf and had third party standing to sue on behalf of its “customers and other similarly situated persons”). Regulation of dealer operations is thus imbued with constitutional concerns. Under *Bruen*, such a law is unconstitutional unless the State can demonstrate a well-established, and representative historical tradition of imposing analogous taxation or burdens on the right to acquire a firearm. See *Bruen*, 597 U.S. at 30. We have found no such historical tradition; it does not exist.

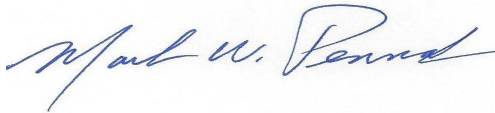
The tax imposed by this Bill threatens the economic viability of all FFLs across the State and thus necessarily burdens the exercise of Second Amendment rights of Marylanders to acquire firearms for their own self-defense. Specifically, the retail sale of firearms and ammunition by FFLs is highly competitive and FFLs work on small margins. An 11% tax on **gross receipts** (the total cost of the product) could easily wipe out the profit margin on any given sale. Maryland already imposes high costs on dealers. This additional 11% tax is a backbreaker. Dealers in Maryland must compete not only with other Maryland dealers but must compete as well with dealers in neighboring state and nation-wide. A special, additional 11% tax on their sales will create a Hopson’s Choice for dealers: Either the absorb the tax and become so unprofitable that they would be forced to close, or pass the tax along to the consumer, and become uncompetitive on price with non-Maryland dealers and be driven out of business for that reason. Either option will result in bankruptcy. The latter option will merely take a little longer.

It bears emphasis that firearms are expensive. An 11% tax on gross receipts could easily drive customers to out-of-State dealers. The likely result is that all but the largest dealers, like WalMart or Bass Pro Shops, will be forced out of business. The overwhelming majority of dealers in this State are small businessmen and businesswomen who lack the resources of such a national retailer. To survive, dealers will be forced to move their operations out of Maryland. Even national chains will take this new tax into account in deciding whether to open new stores or retain existing locations. Driving FFLs out of business may well be the intent behind this Bill, but that “illicit intent” is no more necessary to a finding of unconstitutionality here than it was in *Minneapolis Star*. It is worth noting that in 2013, when Maryland passed the Firearms Safety Act of 2013, a major Maryland firearms manufacturer, Beretta, moved out of Maryland to Tennessee. See <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/beretta-moves-all-manufacturing-out-of-md-after-state-passes-new-gun-bill/2071229/>. Such economically rational decisions by FFLs are to be expected.

Once dealers move, they would then be beyond the ability of Maryland to regulate at all. All the restrictions and security mandates placed on Maryland dealers by Maryland law, see, e.g., 2022 Session Laws, Ch. 55, would not operate on these dealers located just across State lines. Federal law allows dealers to sell long guns to out of state residents if such sales are conducted face-to-face at the dealer’s shop. See 18 U.S.C. § 922(b)(3). Those sales of long guns are cash and carry with nothing more than a NICS background check. Federal law likewise allows out-of-state

dealers to sell handguns to Marylanders. The out-of-state dealer arranges for delivery to the purchaser by shipping the handgun to a Maryland dealer who completes the paperwork (Form 77R) for a small fee (typically around \$25). See *Mance v. Sessions*, 896 F.3d 699, 709 (5th Cir. 2018) (describing the process). This Bill does not tax that transfer fee, but even if it did such a tax would hardly raise much money. The few dealers left in Maryland would still do transfers from such out-of-state dealers. With fewer and fewer Maryland dealers over time, Maryland residents will increasingly purchase firearms, ammunition and accessories in Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, or other locations. Maryland would lose not only revenue from this tax on such sales but would lose revenue from sales taxes and income taxes on the dealers. Everyone loses except neighboring States. These bordering States do not share Maryland's overt hostility toward firearms and gun owners. The tax will not likely generate the amount of revenue envisioned by its sponsors because there will be fewer and fewer sales to tax. For all the foregoing reasons, the Bill will have vast, unintended consequences and will not likely survive court challenges. We urge an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark W. Pennak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Mark W. Pennak  
President, Maryland Shall Issue, Inc.  
mpennak@marylandshallissue.org

**SB784 Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mark Schneider

Position: UNF

## **SB 784**

My Name is Mark Schneider I am the Vice President of the Maryland Licensed Firearm Dealers Association.

Our organization opposes SB784 as it threatens our members' ability to stay in business.

Any tax in addition to our 6% Maryland sales tax would simply encourage residents to shop for their firearms, ammunition and related shooting and hunting supplies out of state. Ammunition and hunting/shooting supplies could simply be purchased online and shipped directly to the purchaser or picked up in another state, thereby avoiding both the Maryland sales tax and the 11% "excise tax". In keeping with both Federal and State laws, firearms could be purchased from dealers out of state and shipped to a licensed dealer in Maryland in compliance with required background checks. This would also avoid both our 6% sales tax and the 11% excise tax.

The net result of this is a loss of income to the state. Maryland licensed dealers would be unable to compete with out of state dealers resulting in job losses and closed businesses.

We urge an unfavorable report.

**2-13-24 SB 0784 -HB0935 - unfavorable .pdf**

Uploaded by: Melissa Idleman

Position: UNF

Greetings,

As someone who recently starting to get involved more in this state education system and Legislature, I unfortunately feel very unsafe.

I have personally always supported our 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment right. Now more than ever I support it because I want to be able to protect myself and my children in life and I want to do in a responsible safe way and be able to afford to do so.

I have watched for years the MD legislature make it harder and harder for the consumer and or companies to allow citizens to protect themselves with LEGAL firearms. I was just too busy raising my family to get involved.

This bill to me is Increasing taxes on the consumer not the business. Any commonsense businessperson knows if you increase taxes on the business that cost gets passed on to the consumer and they need to be able to stay in business. Please just stop making it harder for citizens to protect themselves, especially since this state is getting increasingly unsafe, I feel in record rates.

Please vote for an UNFAVORABLE on SB 0784 Crossfield with HB0935.

Thanks,

Melissa Idleman

**HB 935 SB 784 OPPOSITION.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Burke

Position: UNF

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL F. BURKE, IN OPPOSITION TO HB 935/SB 784

I am – a Veteran with 21 years of military service; I am also an experienced law enforcement officer with more than 30 years of experience at the County, State and Federal levels. I am an expert in Maryland Firearms Law, Federal Firearms law and the law of self-defense; a Maryland State Police certified handgun instructor for the Maryland Wear and Carry Permit and the Maryland Handgun Qualification License (“HQL”); and a certified NRA instructor and Chief Range Safety Officer. Also – I am a Certified Protection Professional (CPP) and subject matter expert in Physical Security and other security disciplines, a locksmith, and a Computer Security and electronics expert. **I appear today in opposition to HB 935/SB 784.**

## The Bill:

**Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act- This bill would impose an excise tax on certain gross receipts of certain firearms dealers derived from the sales of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition in the State; and generally relating to a tax on gross receipts derived from firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition.**

Like so many other laws proposed or passed by the Maryland General Assembly, this harsh tax will unfairly punish and impede the poorest third of the Citizens of this state. Most specifically, this TAX punishes the majority of the residents- the VOTERS- of Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Prince Georges County, as well as the Eastern Shore Counties (Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester), Southern (Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s counties) and Western Maryland (Washington, Allegany, and Garrett counties.)

This TAX will also damage one of Maryland’s most fundamental resources- TOURISM. Tourism is Maryland’s fourth largest industry and has an economic impact on Maryland by creating jobs, generating tax revenue, and increasing business income. Sports shooting and hunting bring billions of dollars in tourism related travel to our state.

[https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt\\_trap/shooting\\_ranges.aspx](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt_trap/shooting_ranges.aspx)

### **Maryland 4-H Shooting Sports**

Youth Shooting Sports Alliance

<https://www.youthshootingsa.com> › Programs

Three state events are held annually and include a state smallbore rifle match state archery match for both compound recurve and a state shotgun match. Maryland 4-H Shooting Sports offers programs in most counties. Availability of Individual shooting disciplines will vary by county. Programs are offered through a variety of methods including year-round clubs, short term special interest programs, summer camps and special events. Three state events are held annually and include a state smallbore rifle match state archery match for both compound recurve and a state shotgun match. Discipline training and certification for adult volunteer instructors is held annually. The Program is conducted through **the University of Maryland Extension** the same as all other 4-H programs.



### **Does Maryland have good hunting?**

Known for its thriving white-tailed deer populations, Western Maryland is the perfect place to harvest deer for the winter. Its stunning natural beauty has long attracted outdoor enthusiast and hunters.

Maryland is home to various huntable species including Sika and Whitetail Deer, Turkey, different waterfowl, upland birds, and other small game.

#### Unforgettable Hunts in the Old Line State

1. Chesapeake Bay: Waterfowl, Turkey, and Sika Deer
2. Talbot: Waterfowl, Turkey, and Deer
3. Assateague Island National Seashore:
4. Dorchester: Sika Deer
5. Kent: Waterfowl, Deer, Turkey, and More
6. Queen Anne's: Whitetail Deer, Waterfowl, and Turkey
7. Newark: Waterfowl, Deer, and Turkey
8. Caroline: Waterfowl, Dove, Turkey, and Deer
9. Harford: Upland Birds
10. Courthouse Point Managed Hunting Area

<https://feedingthehungry.org/>



1 in 8 people in Maryland struggles with hunger.

Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry, PO Box 323, Williamsport, MD, 21795

Hunters- local and out-of-state visitors- DONATE thousands of pounds of meat from successful hunts to the NEEDIEST residents of our state. This unnecessary TAX on law abiding HUNTERS will reduce the amount of FOOD available to hungry women and children across Maryland.

Hunters from other areas will AVOID the tax and spend their time- and money- in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia.

The gross cost of all hunting licenses in Maryland is upwards of \$6 million. But that's merely the tip of the iceberg in terms of how much money hunting generates in the state. According to Hunting Works for Maryland, in 2018, hunting generated **\$401 million** in economic activity in the state, the majority of which was spent at locally owned businesses across the state.

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As hunting diminishes, deer and other populations will explode in numbers, INCEASING deer strikes on the usual Maryland Interstates, State roads, and local streets.

Beyond these arguments – note the following points.

First: this is a futile effort to achieve an impossible goal. (Recall that Beretta moved their billion-dollar manufacturing facilities to Tennessee in 2016 because of Maryland laws and taxes.) Prime military firearms contractors today- SIG-Sauer- build their firearms in New Hampshire, while Glock builds their firearms in Georgia.

Second: many firearms and ammunition sales are handled by the Black-Market dealers across Maryland. They will not comply with any State or Federal firearms laws or regulations as they are criminal organizations engaged in for-profit distribution of prohibited products (guns, drugs, sex slaves, stolen property, etc). They won't pay that 11% tax- they'll buy their stocks in 49 other States and won't even pay the local sales tax.

Third: the legitimate individuals who are Federal Firearms License holders (like myself) will immediately adopt best practices to avoid this TAX by only ordering deliveries of most accessories and ammunition through dealers and vendors in Pennsylvania, Delaware (zero sales tax), Virginia and West Virginia. Countless law-abiding residents of Maryland will continue to visit holiday locations in Ocean City, Spring, Summer and Fall, and stop in Dover or Wilmington shops for shooting supplies (tax free) on the way home. Others will visit Virginia or Harper's Ferry for their shopping pleasure.

The Bill Violates the Second Amendment: This Bill affects the exercise of Second Amendment rights. Under the Supreme Court's recent decision in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*, 142 S.Ct. 2111 (2022), law-abiding gun owners with carry permits have a Second Amendment right to carry in public. 142 S.Ct. at 2135. There is also a well-recognized right to acquire a firearm in this State under the Second Amendment. See *Maryland Shall Issue v. Hogan*, 566 F.Supp. 3d 404, (D. MD 2021). With that right comes the ancillary right to sell firearms, as without dealers, there can be no acquisition. See, e.g., *Andrews v. State*, 50 Tenn. 165, 178 (1871) ("The right to keep arms, necessarily involves the right to purchase them, to keep them in a state of efficiency for use, and to purchase and provide ammunition

suitable for such arms, and to keep them in repair.”); *Teixeira v. City of Alameda*, 873 F.3d 670, 677 (9th Cir. 2017) (en banc), cert. denied, 138 S.Ct. 1988 (2018) (“the core Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms for self-defense ‘wouldn’t mean much’ without the ability to acquire arms”). This Bill would certainly impede the ability of purchasers to acquire firearms BY IMPOSING A POLL TAX.

Even more fundamentally, the State may not condition these Second Amendment rights by subjecting such dealers and customers to unfair TAXATION on 2A protected items. Under the “unconstitutional conditions doctrine,” the State may not condition the exercise of a constitutional right by demanding that a person give up another constitutional right. See, e.g., *Simmons v. United States*, 390 U.S. 377, 393-394 (1968) (it is “intolerable that one constitutional right should have to be surrendered in order to assert another”). Cf. *Perry v. Sindermann*, 408 U.S. 593, 597 (1972) (a government “may not deny a benefit to a person on a basis that infringes his constitutionally protected interests especially, his interest in freedom of speech”); *Elrod v. Burns*, 427 U.S. 347, 359 (1976) (same). That would be true even if there was no Second Amendment right involved at all. See *United States v. American Library Assn., Inc.*, 539 U.S. 194, 210 (2003) (“the government may not deny a benefit to a person on a basis that infringes his constitutionally protected ... freedom of speech even if he has no entitlement to that benefit”). See also *United States v. Scott*, 450 F.3d 863, 868 (9th Cir. 2006) (applying the doctrine to the Fourth Amendment context). It is no answer to these points to assert that the government would not abuse this technology to conduct warrantless surveillance. This “just trust us” approach does not pass constitutional muster. Courts may “not uphold an unconstitutional statute merely because the Government promised to use it responsibly.” *United States v. Stevens*, 559 U.S. 460, 480 (2010). See also *McDonnell v. United States*, 579 U.S. 550, 576 (2016) (same); *Legend Night Club v. Miller*, 637 F.3d 291, 301 (4th Cir. 2011) (same).

In the 1966 case of *Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections*, the Supreme Court reversed its decision in *Breedlove v. Suttles* to also include the imposition of poll taxes in state elections as violating the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

**This Bill, if enacted, will not survive judicial review. We urge an unfavorable report.**

# **ShootingRangesMD.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Burke

Position: UNF

## SHOOTING RANGES IN MARYLAND

To Maryland shooters and hunters,

Do you enjoy shooting for the joy of it? Need a place to improve your proficiency with that trusty compound bow, or sight-in that new rifle you gave yourself as a present for being so good this year? Perhaps you are looking for a place to safely teach your spouse how to properly handle a handgun? This edition of Shooting Ranges in Maryland will help you find just what you are looking for.

Whether it is archery, shotgun, muzzle loader, rifle or handgun you prefer, always remember to think and practice safety. Should you have any ideas on how we might improve this brochure to better serve you in the future, please contact us at the address below.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Heritage Service hopes your experiences at these range sites are enjoyable.

Good Shooting!

### ALLEGANY

City of Frostburg Range  
Route 40, one mile west of Frostburg  
P.O. Box 440 Frostburg, MD 21532  
Phone: 301-689-6000  
Note: Contact City of Frostburg Office for Permission

Cresaptown Sportsman's Club, Inc.  
P.O. Box 5227  
Cresaptown, MD 21505  
Email: [secretary@cresaptownsportsmanclub.com](mailto:secretary@cresaptownsportsmanclub.com)  
Web: [www.cresaptownsportsmanclub.com](http://www.cresaptownsportsmanclub.com)  
Note: Membership required

Fort Hill Rifle and Pistol Club, Inc.  
Ranges at Morningside Drive and Cresap Mill Road  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Contact: [www.fhrpc.org/contact\\_us](http://www.fhrpc.org/contact_us)  
Web: [www.fhrpc.org](http://www.fhrpc.org)  
Note: Membership required

Green Ridge State Forest  
28700 Headquarters Drive NE  
Flintstone, MD 21530-9525  
Phone: 301-478-3124  
Web: [www.dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Documents/greenridge/GRSFS ShootingRangeRules.pdf](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Documents/greenridge/GRSFS ShootingRangeRules.pdf)  
Open during office hours, 8am to sunset.  
Note: Daily fee/permit required from office

## ANNE ARUNDEL

Anne Arundel Fish and Game Conservation Association  
P. O. Box 150, 1730 Saint Margarets Road  
Arnold, MD 21012  
Phone: 410-757-6800  
Web: [www.aafg.org](http://www.aafg.org)  
Note: Membership required

On Target, Inc.  
2618 Annapolis Road  
Severn, MD 21144  
Phone: 301-621-7777; 410-551-7777  
Web: [www.ontarget.biz](http://www.ontarget.biz)  
Note: Walk-ins welcome and memberships available

Stoney Creek Fishing and Hunting Club  
9090 Fort Smallwood Road  
Pasadena MD 21122  
Phone: 410-255-9653  
Web: [www.scfhclub.org/ContactUs.aspx](http://www.scfhclub.org/ContactUs.aspx)  
Note: Membership required

Three Rivers Sportsmen Club  
P. O. Box 219  
215 Three Rivers Road  
Harwood, MD 20776  
Phone: 410-867-1400  
Web: [www.threeriverssportsmen.com/](http://www.threeriverssportsmen.com/)  
Note: Membership required

Twelfth Precinct Pistol and Archery Club, Inc.  
P.O. Box 26  
450 Harwood Road  
Harwood MD 20776  
Phone: 410-867-0560  
Web: [www.twelfthprecinct.org](http://www.twelfthprecinct.org)  
Note: Membership required

## BALTIMORE

Associated Gun Clubs of Baltimore, Inc.  
11518 Marriottsville Road  
Marriottsville, MD 21104  
Phone: 410-461-8532  
Email: [webmaster@associatedgunclubs.org](mailto:webmaster@associatedgunclubs.org)  
Web: [www.associatedgunclubs.org](http://www.associatedgunclubs.org)  
Note: Association of 26 separate gun clubs - go to website for more info  
Membership required

Baltimore County Game and Fish Protective Association, Inc.  
3400 Northwind Road  
Baltimore, MD 21234  
Phone: 410-668-4327  
Web: <http://www.bcgf.org/>  
Note: Membership required

Carney Rod & Gun Club  
9721 Hilltop Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21234  
Phone: 410-668-1019  
Web: [www.carneyrodandgunclub.com/](http://www.carneyrodandgunclub.com/)  
Note: Membership required

Continental Arms  
9603 Deereco Road, Suite 500  
Timonium, MD 21093  
Phone: 410-560-3609  
Web: [www.continentalarms.com](http://www.continentalarms.com)  
Note: Walk-ins welcome and memberships available

Freestate Gun Range  
11500 Crossroads Cir, Suite J  
Middle River, MD 21220  
Phone: 410-335-5100  
Web: [www.freestategunrange.com/](http://www.freestategunrange.com/)  
Note: Walk-ins welcome and memberships available

Loch Raven Skeet & Trap Club, Inc.  
12301 Dulaney Valley Road  
P.O. Box 6846  
Baltimore, MD 21285  
Phone: 410-252-3851  
Web: [www.lochravenskeettrap.com](http://www.lochravenskeettrap.com)  
Note: Walk-ins welcome and memberships available

## CAROLINE

Schrader's Outdoors  
16090 Oakland Road  
Henderson, MD 21640  
Phone: 410-758-1824  
Web: [www.schradershunting.com](http://www.schradershunting.com)  
Note: Sporting Clays, Walk-ins

## CARROLL

Carroll County Gun Club  
129 W. Liberty Road  
Eldersburg MD 21784  
Phone: 410-795-9839  
Web: [www.carrollgun.com/](http://www.carrollgun.com/)

Dug Hill Rod & Gun Club  
4100 Wine Road  
Westminster, MD 21157  
Phone: 410-848-8646  
Web: [www.dughill.org](http://www.dughill.org)

Hap Baker Firearms Facility  
Carroll County Landfill  
1400 Baltimore Blvd.  
225 N. Center St. Room 100  
Westminster MD 21157  
Contact: Carroll County Dept. of Recreation & Parks  
Phone: 410-386-2103; 888-302-8978 toll free  
Email: [ccrec@ccq.carr.org](mailto:ccrec@ccq.carr.org)

Mayberry Archers  
2555 Mayberry Road  
P.O. Box 2183  
Westminster, MD 21158  
Phone: 410-346-7927  
Web: [www.mayberryarchers.org](http://www.mayberryarchers.org)

## CECIL

Elk Neck State Forest  
717 Irishtown Road  
North East, MD 21901  
Phone: 410-287-5675  
Web: [www.dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/publiclands/central\\_elkneckforest.aspx](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/publiclands/central_elkneckforest.aspx)  
Permit required.  
Closed Mondays.  
Open Tuesday through Sunday 9:00 am to dusk.

## CHARLES

Fred's Sports  
2895 Crain Hwy  
Waldorf, MD 20601 Phone:  
301-843-3040  
Web: <http://www.fredsoutdoors.com/>



Metro Gun Club  
3295 Metro Gun Place  
Waldorf, MD 20601  
Phone: (301) 643-3256  
Trap and Skeet Members and Public (selected hours of operation)

Myrtle Grove Wildlife Management Area  
5625 Myrtle Grove Road  
LaPlata, MD 20646  
Phone: 301-743-5161 Web:  
[www.dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/publiclands/southern/myrtlegrove.aspx](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/publiclands/southern/myrtlegrove.aspx)  
Permit required.  
Shooters must supply all target equipment.  
Call for more information.

St. Charles Sportsmen's Club  
4045 Renner Road  
Waldorf, MD 20602  
Phone: 301-870-1000  
Web [www.StCharlesSC.com](http://www.StCharlesSC.com)

#### FREDERICK

Cresap Rifle Club, Inc.  
6240 Plant Road  
Frederick, MD 21701  
Phone: 301-662-6669  
Web: [www.cresaprifleclub.com](http://www.cresaprifleclub.com)

Izaak Walton League of America, Frederick Chapter  
4719 Reels Mill Road  
Frederick, MD 21704  
Phone: 240-629-2107  
Web: [www.FrederickIWLA.org](http://www.FrederickIWLA.org)

Izaak Walton League of America, Mt. Airy Chapter  
6642 Woodville Road  
Mt. Airy, MD 21771  
Phone: 301-829-2998  
Web: [www.mtairyiwla.org/](http://www.mtairyiwla.org/)

Monocacy Pistol Club  
P.O. Box 1377  
Frederick, MD 21702  
Phone: 301-668-2065  
Web: [www.monocacypistolclub.org](http://www.monocacypistolclub.org)

Thurmont Conservation and Sportsman's Club  
11617 Hunt Club Road  
Thurmont, MD 21788  
Phone: 301-898-9093  
Web: [www.tcandsc.org](http://www.tcandsc.org)

Tuscarora Gun Club  
5008 Tuscarora Road  
Tuscarora, MD 21780  
Phone: 301-874-2620  
Email: [cass@avid-ed.com](mailto:cass@avid-ed.com)

## GARRETT

Savage River State Forest  
349 Headquarters Lane  
Grantsville, MD 21536  
Phone: 301-895-5759  
Web: [www.dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/publiclands/western\\_savageriverforest.aspx](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/publiclands/western_savageriverforest.aspx)  
Open seven days a week. Fee required for use of range.

## HARFORD

Bel Air Gun Range  
2137 North Fountain Green Road  
Bel Air, MD 21015  
Phone: 410-399-9518; Toll Free 800-941-5804  
Web: [www.belairgunrange.com](http://www.belairgunrange.com)

## KENT

Hopkins Game Farm  
13003 Turners Creek Road  
P.O. Box 218  
Kennedyville, MD 21645  
Phone: 410-348-5287  
Web: [www.hopkinshunting-clays.com](http://www.hopkinshunting-clays.com)

Du Pont Fish & Game Association  
33430 Walnut Tree Road  
Millington MD 21651  
Phone: 410-928-5565  
Web: [www.dfga.org/](http://www.dfga.org/)

## MONTGOMERY

Gilbert Indoor Range  
14690 Rothgeb Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850  
Phone: 301-315-0300  
Web: [www.gilbertindoorange.com](http://www.gilbertindoorange.com)

Izaak Walton League of America, Bethesda Chevy Chase Chapter  
PO Box 542  
20601 Izaak Walton Way  
Poolesville, MD 20837  
Contact: [www.bcciwla.org/contact](http://www.bcciwla.org/contact)  
Web: [www.bcciwla.org/](http://www.bcciwla.org/)

Izaak Walton League, Rockville Chapter  
18301 Waring Station Road  
Germantown, MD 20874  
Phone: 301-972-1645  
Email: [iwlar@iwla-rockville.com](mailto:iwlar@iwla-rockville.com)  
Web: [www.iwlar.org](http://www.iwlar.org)

Izaak Walton League of America, Wildlife Achievement Chapter  
26430 Mullinix Mill Road  
Mt. Airy, MD 21771  
Phone: 301-253-4779 or 2384  
Contact: [IzaakWaltonWAC@aol.com](mailto:IzaakWaltonWAC@aol.com)  
Web: [www.DamascusWLA.org](http://www.DamascusWLA.org)

Lake Needwood Archery Range  
Rock Creek Regional Park  
Needwood Road and Beech Drive  
6700 Needwood Road  
Rockville, MD 20855  
Phone: 301-948-5053  
Web: [www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/rock-creek-regional-park/](http://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/rock-creek-regional-park/)

## PRINCE GEORGE'S

Berwyn Rod and Gun Club  
8311 Laurel Bowie Road  
Bowie, MD 20715  
Phone: 301-464-9830  
Web: [www.berwyn.org/](http://www.berwyn.org/)

Cheltenham Wildlife Management Area, Archery Range  
11000 Old Indian Head Road  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Phone: 301-743-5161  
Web: [www.dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/Publiclands/Southern/Cheltenham.aspx](http://www.dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/Publiclands/Southern/Cheltenham.aspx)

Maryland Small Arms Range, Inc.  
9801 Fallard Ct.  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Phone: 800-792-6434  
Web: [www.msar.com](http://www.msar.com)

Prince George's County Trap, Skeet and Sporting Clays  
10400 Goodluck Road  
Glenn Dale, MD 20769  
Phone: 301-577-7178  
Web: [www.pgparcs.com/1283/trap-skeet](http://www.pgparcs.com/1283/trap-skeet)

## QUEEN ANNE'S

Delmarva Sportsman Association, Inc.  
816 Sudlersville Cemetery Road  
Sudlersville, MD 21668  
Phone: 410-438-9832  
Web: [www.dsarange.com](http://www.dsarange.com)

Pintail Point  
511 Pintail Point Lane  
Queenstown, MD 21658  
Phone: 410-827-7065  
Web: [www.pointatpintail.com](http://www.pointatpintail.com)

Tuckahoe Bowman, Tuckahoe State Park  
13070 Crouse Mill Road  
Queen Anne, MD 21657  
Phone: 410-822-7570; 410-820-9779  
Web: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/eastern/tuckahoe.aspx> and  
[www.facebook.com/Tuckahoe-Bowmen-127352757390463/](http://www.facebook.com/Tuckahoe-Bowmen-127352757390463/)

Sudlersville Skeet Club  
1240 Duhamel Corner Road  
Sudlersville, MD 21093  
Phone: 410-560-3609  
Web: [www.sudlersvilleskeetclub.com](http://www.sudlersvilleskeetclub.com)

## ST. MARY'S

Pax River Skeet Club  
P.O. Box 333  
Tate Road, Bldg. 2039  
Patuxent River, MD 20670  
Phone: 301-342-4513  
Open to DOD employees, contractors and guests. Sporting clays events held. Firearms must be registered with base security.

## TALBOT

Talbot Rod and Gun Club  
P.O. Box 162 (Chapel Road)  
Easton, MD 21601  
Phone: 410-822-4442  
Web: [www.talbotrodandgunclub.com](http://www.talbotrodandgunclub.com)

## WASHINGTON

Izaak Walton League of America, Washington County Chapter  
12759 Independence Road  
Clear Spring, MD 21722  
Phone: 301-582-3070  
Web: [www.washcoiwa.com/home](http://www.washcoiwa.com/home)

North American Rod & Gun Club  
12108 Belvedere Road  
Hagerstown, MD 21742  
Phone: 301-739-4440  
Web: [www.nargc.biz](http://www.nargc.biz)

## WICOMICO

Delmarva Sporting Clays & Shooting Facility  
23501 Marsh Road  
Mardela Springs, MD 21837  
Phone: 410-742-2023; 800-310-2023  
Web: [www.dscff.com/](http://www.dscff.com/)

Gunsmoke Outfitters  
P. O. Box 690  
Bethel Road  
Willards, MD 21874  
Phone: 410-835-2324  
Web: [www.gunsmokeoutfitters.com/](http://www.gunsmokeoutfitters.com/)

Salisbury Gun Club, Inc.  
32240 Dagsboro Road  
P.O. Box 4061  
Salisbury Maryland, 21803  
Phone: 410-749-0337  
Web: [www.salisburygunclub.com](http://www.salisburygunclub.com)

## WORCESTER

Synepuxent Rod & Gun Club  
P.O. Box 724  
7909 Purnell Crossing Road  
Berlin, MD 21811  
Phone: 410-641-1598  
Web: [www.srgunclub.com](http://www.srgunclub.com)

For more information, please contact: Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service Tawes State Office Building, E-1 Annapolis MD 21401 410-260-8540 Toll-free in Maryland: 1-877-620-8DNR, Ext. 8540



**SB 784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nicholas DeTello

Position: UNF

Nicholas DeTello  
SB 784 - Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act  
Unfavorable  
2/13/2024

SB 784 - UNFAV

As your constituent, and as a member of the Board of Directors at Maryland Shall Issue, while my views do not necessarily represent the organization, I am personally against this bill and implore the Senate to find it unfavorable.

Per the [Fiscal and Policy note](#) for this bill, the impact on small business will be “potentially meaningful... some portion of the cost of the new tax may be passed on to the consumers through increased prices.” The impact is all but certain; small businesses will pass this on to consumers; consumers will no longer have a reason to purchase firearms in Maryland, and will take their business to other states – defeating the entire purpose of this bill, to raise additional funds out of gun seller’s / owner’s wallets.

Additionally, per the same [Fiscal and Policy note](#), in Revenue distribution: “23% to the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund”. Upon investigating this fund [here](#) and this 2021 evaluation of it [here](#), “Safe Streets Baltimore” was one of the highest funded VIPP-funded projects. This organization is not “a trauma center” as Senator Elfreth and Senate President Ferguson conflated with this bill; it is under investigation [by the FBI for potential gang links](#).

For these reasons, I urge an unfavorable report.

Thank you,

Nicholas DeTello



**SB 784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nicholas DeTello

Position: UNF

Nicholas DeTello  
SB 784 - Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act  
Unfavorable  
2/13/2024

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One other thing to consider; this is a tax on the poor and those who would need firearms the most to defend themselves. Most wealthy firearms owners will go out of state to bypass this tax; those in Baltimore wishing to defend themselves will be left most vulnerable with no feasible arms to defend themselves. The MGA has a strong history of disarming such people; please recall the single shot requirement for the HQL in years past (with no shooting ranges in city limits).

For these reasons, I urge an unfavorable report.

Thank you,

Nicholas DeTello

# **SB0784Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Richard Rosa

Position: UNF

This bill is named "Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act" to hide the fact that this is a new Excise Tax proposed on the hard working citizens of Maryland. Not only that, but it specifically taxes law abiding firearms owners. Criminals do not buy their firearms via legal methods, and therefore would not be paying this tax.

Hunters already provide \$7 Million a year in hunting licenses, tags, permits & stamps to Maryland. Law abiding firearm owners already pay sales tax on firearms, ammunition, and accessories.

Proceeds from this new excise tax would be used for shock trauma centers as if legal firearm owners are the cause of people needing shock trauma centers. This is not true.

I reside in Maryland and have been a law abiding firearm owner for over 40 years. I have never needed the services of a trauma shock center. I have never caused another person to need a shock trauma center. I don't know any law abiding firearm owner who has.

Please OPPOSE SB0784.

**sb0784f\_kasuba\_UNFAVORABLE.pdf**

Uploaded by: Thomas Kasuba

Position: UNF

Please **UNFAVORABLE** SB 784  
Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

I didn't realize that my teenage daughter was responsible for making our communities unsafe and therefore has to pay tribute to atone for her actions. Let me explain. Below is a picture of a box of ammo that could easily fit in the palm of your hand.



Filled with actual ammo, this single box can be used for 2 months worth of Baltimore's murder. (The box content isn't responsible but actual people misusing the contents are and those criminals aren't my daughter!) For comparison, with this single box:

I need 3 TIMES the number of boxes for one Saturday morning contest; 9 TIMES if both my daughters go.

I need 16 TIMES this for a long range day with my daughters.

I need 20 TIMES this per WEEK! when my daughter trains for her national level contests.

I see 300 TIMES this used at every weekend morning contest that I help officiate.

So who does this bill affect? The 100s of murderers gleefully walking the streets of Baltimore or a Dad and his daughters? Why is it that my daughter and I are being punished for the heinous actions of others? Explain to me that.

Thomas J. Kasuba (registered Democrat)  
2917 Rosemar Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043-3332  
tomkasubamd@netscape.net  
301-688-8543 (day)  
February 4, 2024

# **TESTIMONY OF TOM DEBOLT- OPPOSITION TO SB 784.pdf**

Uploaded by: Tom Debolt

Position: UNF

TESTIMONY OF MR. TOM DEBOLT  
GENERAL MANAGER OF BENELLI U.S.A. AND  
PRESIDENT OF STOEGER INDUSTRIES, INC.

SB 784- COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SAFETY FUNDING ACT- UNFAVORABLE

My name is Tom DeBolt and I am General Manager of Benelli U.S.A. and President of Stoeger Industries, Inc. Along with our sister company Beretta U.S.A., all three of these companies are headquartered in Maryland. Our offices are in Accokeek in Prince George's County. In addition, Benelli U.S.A. and Stoeger have a warehouse, shipping center and gunsmithing operation in Pocomoke City on the Eastern shore.

As currently written, SB 784 would arguably impose an 11% excise tax on almost every firearm we sell. We believe the intent of the bill was to impose such a tax on retail consumer sales but the bill itself does not say that. It applies the tax on almost all firearm, ammunition and spare magazine sales made by any federally licensed firearm dealer in the State.

Each of our three companies is a federally licensed firearm dealer and due to tax nexus from our operations, we treat all of our firearm sales as having been made from within Maryland, even though our distributor, chain store and retail dealer customers are almost all in states other than Maryland. We have almost no sales to retail consumers located in Maryland and when we do it is typically only to our employees.

In aggregate, these three companies sell over \$500 million worth of firearms each year. In aggregate, we pay well over \$3.5 million in taxes and fees to the State of Maryland and over \$9 million to our Maryland resident employees, of which we have 103. If we have to add 11% to the cost we charge on all such sales, we



simply cannot afford to maintain our sales and other tax nexus creating activities in Maryland. This would be not only because of the massive cost involved—over \$55 million—but also because our competitor manufacturers, importers and distributors in other states are not similarly disadvantaged by such a tax.

If SB 784 becomes law we would be forced to move our sales and related activities out of Maryland. If we move our core operations, we would also have to determine whether it made sense to move all of our operations to another state, thus imperiling around 103 jobs to our Maryland workers and depriving them of the health care benefits, life insurance, income and other benefits they and their families now receive because they work for us.

In addition, the State of Maryland would be deprived of all investment we make in the state, as well as the benefit of our tax and other payments made directly to the State or through our payment of taxes on behalf of our Maryland employees.

While we understand and sympathize with the use to which SB 784 taxes would be applied, there is something fundamentally unfair to the law-abiding residents of the state who alone would have to pay for the cost of firearm misuse by criminal and other persons whose conduct the law-abiding residents neither condone nor control. All Maryland residents suffer from the costs of firearm misuse. We believe all should contribute equally to address those costs.

I am a longtime Maryland resident. On behalf of the employees of Benelli U.S.A., Stoeger Industries and Beretta U.S.A. I implore this Committee to vote against SB 784.

# **2024 SB 784 - Comprehensive Community Safety Fundi**

Uploaded by: angelo consoli

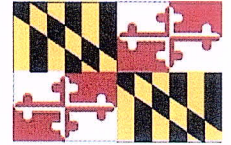
Position: INFO



CLYDE BOATWRIGHT  
STATE PRESIDENT

Maryland State Lodge  
**FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE**

8302 COVE ROAD, BALTIMORE, MD 21222



KENNY SCHUBERT  
SECRETARY

EARL KRATSCH  
TREASURER

February 13, 2024

**SB 784 - Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Distinguished Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

The Maryland State Fraternal Order of Police offers this letter of information to voice the concerns we have with Senate Bill 784 - **Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act** as it concerns our members.

**Senate Bill 784** will create and impose a firearm, firearm accessory, and ammunition excise tax and set that rate at 11%. If created the law specifies how this new excise tax would be distributed as well. This tax would not apply to a Law Enforcement Agency, the Armed Forces of the United States, or the National Guard.

Both Active and Retired Law Enforcement Officers in this State purchase and carry firearms and the ammunition that goes with them for their off duty and/or personal use. While active officers are issued service firearms and the required ammunition for them, there is a need to purchase ammunition throughout the year for those that utilize a firearms range to remain proficient with their firearms. Many also purchase smaller or different firearms than their service firearm to carry off duty. Retired Officers purchase firearms that they legally carry with a Maryland State handgun permit or a Law Enforcement Officer Safety Act (LEOSA) permit. They also purchase ammunition to use in their firearms as well as to use at firearms ranges to stay proficient with their firearms. Many of our members also purchase accessories for their firearms that would also be subject to this tax and/or are also avid hunters which requires the purchase of additional firearms, accessories, and ammunition. This excise tax would put an undue burden on our members as it will undoubtedly be passed on to the consumer through an equivalent price increase to offset the cost to the dealer responsible for paying the tax.

We would ask that consideration be made for an amendment to SB 784 that would exempt active and retired law enforcement officers. If not possible in this bill itself, then through an income tax credit for covered purchases that would be equal to the 11% increase the officer had to pay.

On behalf of the more than 20,000 Courageous Men and Women of the Maryland Fraternal Order of Police we thank you for your support and ask for your consideration in **amending Senate Bill 784 - Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act** to ensure that the effects of it do not negatively affect our membership.

Angelo L. Consoli Jr,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, FOP, Maryland State Lodge  
President, FOP Lodge 89, Prince George's County

**SB 784 - LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Justin Hayes

Position: INFO

**Letter of Information – Senate Bill 784 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

*Budget and Tax Committee  
February 14, 2024*

We greatly appreciate Senator Elfreth bringing this important piece of legislation. SB 784, the Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act focuses on a critical area of need for the state – supporting organizations that serve on the front lines of addressing the impacts of gun violence, including the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, and dedicating funds to address community and firearm violence.

Under this legislation, the Office of the Comptroller would be responsible for building a new, complex tax type in our legacy tax system. We have set strategic to modernize existing legacy technology platforms and processes that have not been upgraded for decades. The current system is housed on a mainframe and is not nimble or easily updated – particularly for new or complex tax types. We are actively working toward ways to accomplish this and other goals of the General Assembly within the limitations that we are currently facing. We will continue to do so until we can operate Personal Income Tax within the new, integrated tax system, which is publicly known as Maryland Tax Connect.

We remain steadfast in our eagerness to work with the General Assembly to achieve its goals as intended while taking into account the technological and operational limitations that currently exist within the agency.

Given the challenges with our current, legacy tax processing system, we appreciate the bill sponsor's willingness to have ongoing conversations with our office to ensure the Comptroller's Office is able to implement this bill as intended and we anticipate continuing those conversations. We are committed to providing answers to the sponsor and the committee in an expedited fashion to assess operational impacts and limitations.

As always, the Comptroller's Office remains committed to supporting initiatives that benefit the community and look forward to working with you on this matter. Please contact Justin Hayes, Director of State Affairs at [jhayes@marylandtaxes.gov](mailto:jhayes@marylandtaxes.gov) or 410-260-7696, with any questions.



**SB 784 Statement of Information 2.14.24.pdf**

Uploaded by: Laura Vykol-Gray

Position: INFO



**Maryland**

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET  
AND MANAGEMENT

WES MOORE  
*Governor*

ARUNA MILLER  
*Lieutenant Governor*

HELENE GRADY  
*Secretary*

MARC L. NICOLE  
*Deputy Secretary*

## **SENATE BILL 784 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**

### **STATEMENT OF SUPPORT**

**DATE:** February 14, 2024

**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Senate Bill 784 would impose an excise tax of 11% on the sale of firearm and firearm accessories. The bill also specifies the distribution of these revenues: 44% to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund; 29% to the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical System; 23% to the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund; 2% to the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program within the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy; and 2% to the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention within the Maryland Department of Health.

**EXPLANATION:** According to the Comptroller's Office, special fund revenues are projected to increase by \$69 million starting in fiscal 2025, growing to an estimated \$80 million by fiscal 2029.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) is charged with submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually and will be working with the General Assembly to achieve structural balance over the long-term. In light of current projected general fund deficits in fiscal 2026 forward, the Department and the Moore Administration overall is supportive of creative solutions to fund key priorities. Public safety is a top priority of the Administration, and the revenue raised by this legislation would be devoted to vital violence prevention and intervention programs in Maryland.

**Position:** DBM supports Senate Bill 784.

**For additional information, contact Laura Vykol-Gray at  
(410) 260-6371 or [laura.vykol@maryland.gov](mailto:laura.vykol@maryland.gov)**

# **SB784 TraumaNet Informational Letter for Comprehen**

Uploaded by: Raymond Fang

Position: INFO





**SB 784**  
**Informational Only**

TO: The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair  
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

FROM: Raymond Fang, MD, FACS  
Chair, Maryland Trauma Center Network [TraumaNet]

DATE: February 13, 2024

TraumaNet wishes to provide information regarding **SB 784 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**. We appreciate the sponsors' commitment to support all of Maryland's trauma centers in delivering life-saving care and the best hope for return to health to our fellow Marylanders after injury that may occur any time of day or night.

TraumaNet is a multidisciplinary advocacy group focused on optimizing trauma care within Maryland with representation from each of the State's designated trauma centers and specialty referral centers. TraumaNet promotes excellence in trauma care by focusing on issues related to direct patient care, research, education, injury prevention and healthcare policy. TraumaNet partners with the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) to create a collaborative statewide approach to trauma care.

In 2003, the Maryland General Assembly created the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund ('Trauma Fund') to financially assist Maryland's trauma centers. In the subsequent 20 years, the adequacy of this support had not been comprehensively reviewed. In 2023, TraumaNet supported the legislation that created the **Commission to Study Trauma Center Funding in Maryland**. The Commission concluded that *"it is in the public's best interest to fund a trauma system that is in a perpetual state of readiness for the next injured person"* wherever in Maryland they may be. TraumaNet supports the Commission's recommendations

The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center ("Shock Trauma") anchors the Maryland trauma system and is recognized as a global leader in trauma care. As the state-designated Primary Adult Resource Center, Shock Trauma receives approximately 32% of its patients as transfers-in from other Maryland hospitals. In FY 2023, Shock Trauma treated 24% of the adult trauma patients in Maryland. The majority of injured adults are cared for by other trauma centers in the Maryland system allowing them to remain closer to their homes and families and preserving Shock Trauma's resources for patients with greatest need.

The Commission recognized that all of Maryland's trauma centers are under financial stress due to undercompensated costs to maintain trauma readiness.

These costs vary considerably related to level of trauma center designation, patient volume and geographic location.

The Commission's recommendations include:

- Modifying the existing scope of the Trauma Fund and adding additional flexibility for its administration especially in managing reserve funds to support evolving trauma center needs.
- Raising the already existing assessment on motor vehicle registration (\$5 per biennial registration) and potentially identifying other revenue sources (such as this bill) to support increased investment in trauma care.
- Directing the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) to audit, standardize and annually report trauma readiness costs across the trauma centers that are included in the hospital rate structure.
- Requiring Trauma Centers develop and report on trauma care quality measures to be accountable for the State's increased investment.

Dr. Thomas M. Scalea, Physician-in-Chief of the Shock Trauma Center, describes his institution as "*a gift from the people of Maryland to the people of Maryland.*" This is true of the entire Maryland trauma system that only exists to care for our fellow citizens at time of potential life-saving and life-changing need. TraumaNet is committed to collaborating with all stakeholders in supporting trauma readiness and optimized outcomes for injured patients at any time and at all locations within Maryland.

cc: Members, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee