



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE CITY

January 23, 2024

The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
6 Bladen Street, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support of HBO021 – Criminal Procedure – Warrantless Arrest – Straw Purchase Participant

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Office of the State's Attorney for Baltimore City, I ask that you strongly consider supporting HBO021 – Criminal Procedures for Warrantless Arrests of those making straw purchases.

As I am sure you are aware, my office has been laser-focused on trying to tackle the issue of guns, as it relates to the illegal carrying, transportation and/or purchasing of said weapons, which often times lands in the hands of those looking to cause harm in our communities, thereby leading to fatal and non-fatal shootings.

One such issue is that of ghost guns and straw purchases, which has become an increasing problem across the State of Maryland, especially in the City of Baltimore, as they are reported to be attributable to more than 25% of the weapons used in attempted murders and homicides. In fact, in [one study](#) published by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which looked at trafficked and illegal gun purchases, they found that upwards of 41% were straw purchases from federally licensed dealers.

The issue of straw purchasing was the main factor behind one of Baltimore City's most notorious killers, Nathaniel Dawson, Jr. who purchased firearms bought for him by a 39-year old working mother who used the \$500 he paid her for the \$6,000 worth of weapons she obtained, to help feed her family. She never realized what Mr. Dawson intended to do with these weapons, and never fathomed that he would use them to help run a murderous East Baltimore drug ring and wind up murdering a 10-year old child.

Delegate Attar's insight into this issue is spot-on in our estimation, and I believe that any legislation that speaks to cracking down on such crimes, and seeks to prevent the proliferation of illegal firearms onto our streets, is something worthy of your support.



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Thank you for your time and consideration today, and I respectfully urge a favorable vote for HB0021.

Yours in Service,

Ivan J. Bates

Ivan J. Bates
State's Attorney for Baltimore City

By: Hassan Giordano
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