



MARYLAND
SCHOOL
COUNSELOR
ASSOCIATION

Committee: **Judiciary**

Bill Number: **House Bill 583 – Center for Firearm Violence Prevention –
Establishment**

Hearing Date: **February 14, 2024**

Position: **Support**

The Maryland School Counselor Association (MSCA) – a professional organization of over 900 counselors who work with students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade in public, private, charter, and magnet school settings. MSCA supports government action to address the horrific and preventable violence that has plagued our State and taken the lives of students and school personnel. Therefore, we support ***House Bill 583 – Center for Firearm Violence Prevention – Establishment.***

Gun violence is the leading cause of premature death in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018) reported that an average of seven children and teens are killed with guns in the United States every day. School counselors collaborate with school staff and the community to ensure students attend schools where the environment is conducive to teaching and learning. To support the work of school counselors and school staff, schools and communities should be free from gun violence and threats.

We are grateful for leadership of the Moore-Miller Administration in establishing an office that will consolidate and better coordinate the State’s public health approach to preventing gun violence. Statewide coordination throughout sectors will help to address this crisis that threatens the safety of our schools.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Jocelyn I. Collins at jcollins@policypartners.net.