

February 5, 2020

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SCOTT G. DAVIS IN OPPOSITION TO SB208

I appreciate the opportunity to present my testimony in strong opposition to SB208 to the members of this committee this afternoon.

This companion bill of HB4, which was originally sponsored by House Vice Chair Atterbeary, are identical bills without the HB4 amendments. I want to focus on a few things that I find troubling about this bill.

According to House Vice Chair Atterbeary's testimony, I quote her as saying "**Between 2013 through 2017 there were 10 recorded deaths by long guns that should not have happened**, so how many deaths does this panel think is necessary to happen before we do start requiring to have background checks so that we can make sure that felons and abusers don't have them? How many, how many? How many, 2? 5?" Interrupting the panel and not allowing them to speak.

This is a 2 part question and I am going to approach this from several angles. First, as you can clearly see in my written testimony attachments, I have provided the number of **all** homicides committed by **all** firearms that happened between 2013 through 2017 in Baltimore City **alone**. Please refer to the last 5 pages of my testimony that contains annual numbers and charts of the gun homicides. This 5 year span saw a total of **1,222** homicides committed through the use of all guns as reported on the <https://homicides.news.baltimoresun.com> website, which keeps track of every single homicide that happens within the city each year. They are hard numbers and that is a hard pill to swallow. Please see attachments for each year.

Let's put this in perspective. The testimony by House Vice Chair Atterbeary, who pushed this bill forward, is comparing **10 known long gun homicides to 1,222 total gun homicides. This puts the percentage of what Atterbeary is pushing, 10 long gun homicides at 0.8%, and leaves the additional 99.2% of the remaining gun homicides out to pasture.** Let that sink in. I ask the panel in front of me today, **IS THIS BILL THE BEST THAT YOU HAVE TO CURB GUN VIOLENCE IN JUST ONE CITY IN THE ENTIRE STATE? 0.8% is all that you can offer the citizens of this state with this particular bill?** If it is, then I only have 0.8% confidence that this panel has the ability to curb the homicide rate by guns within Baltimore, let alone the entire state. I might as well say that I have 0% confidence that anyone on this panel voting in favor of passing this legislation has the capability of doing what this bill is designed to do, and that is to save the innocent lives of the people of the great state of Maryland.

Secondly, in comparison to Vice Chair Atterbeary's quote above, I want to know how many innocent people's lives does this panel find acceptable to *ruin* by with this bill? I want to know how many innocent, law abiding citizens lives you are comfortable with that will be devastated by getting caught up in the unsuspecting net of loaning a gun to a law abiding, gun owning friend on private property without the owners presence for target practice? For hunting? How many lives are going to be ruined due to people unknowingly temporarily storing their firearms at a trusted, law abiding friend's house

due to the fact that they may be moving or are the victim of a fire or any other tragic event? By chance, I just spoke to a gunsmith at a local gun show that was planning on storing his firearms at a trusted friend's house while he tears one house down to build another. I immediately pulled this bill up on the MGA website. I told him that if this bill passes, he will be found guilty of loaning guns to someone outside of the "approved list". I informed him that he will be facing 5 years in prison and or a \$10,000.000 fine. He was shocked.

I can think of dozens of scenarios where law abiding citizens will unknowingly break this law and suffer the consequences. Over a 5 year course, as House Vice Chair Atterbeary expressed concerns about, I can guarantee you that this bill **will ruin far more than 10 people if it becomes law**. Much of the public are not aware of what happens in this room. This bill does not specifically tell someone that they cannot do these particular things that I have mentioned. One has to read between the lines. The common citizen of this state does not have the time to read the MGA bills that become law each year. It is left up to them to find out the hard way. Unfortunately, the hard way means unknowingly getting caught doing something that you had no idea was illegal, getting a 5 year prison sentence and/or a \$10,000 fine.

Compare these circumstances to a criminal that knowingly steals a gun and gets a 3 year prison sentence. How can this panel justify this unbalance? How many people on this panel can feel good and sleep well at night knowing that they are crafting a law that will harm far more innocent law abiding gun owners while taking care of a possible, mere 0.8% of gun homicides? The ends do not justify the means. This is totally unacceptable and far from common sense which is the term pushed by gun control advocates.

Even if all guns were banned and confiscated in this state, it will not change the mentality of the people that are committing these homicides. They do not, all of a sudden, just become happy, productive people. They will simply move on to the next available tool to commit these atrocities. Their mental illness, anger, rage, desperation and angst is still there. A meat cleaver purchased from Wal-Mart, a steel pipe purchased from Lowe's, or a baseball bat purchased from a sporting goods store have the potential to fulfill any killers desires... all without a background check and cost far less than a firearm.

When is the MGA going to move the focus of our homicide issue to a "people problem" instead of a "gun problem?" Until the MGA starts to focus on what drives these people to commit these crimes, address the issues and come up with common sense solutions, this homicide problem does not go away.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "SCOTT DAVIS". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops for the letters.

Scott G. Davis

BALTIMORE HOMICIDES

Use the filters to choose which Baltimore homicides since 2007 appear on the map. Click or tap a point for more info on that homicide.

RESET

Time frame

All of 2013

Age

All

District

All

Gender

All

ZIP code

All

Race

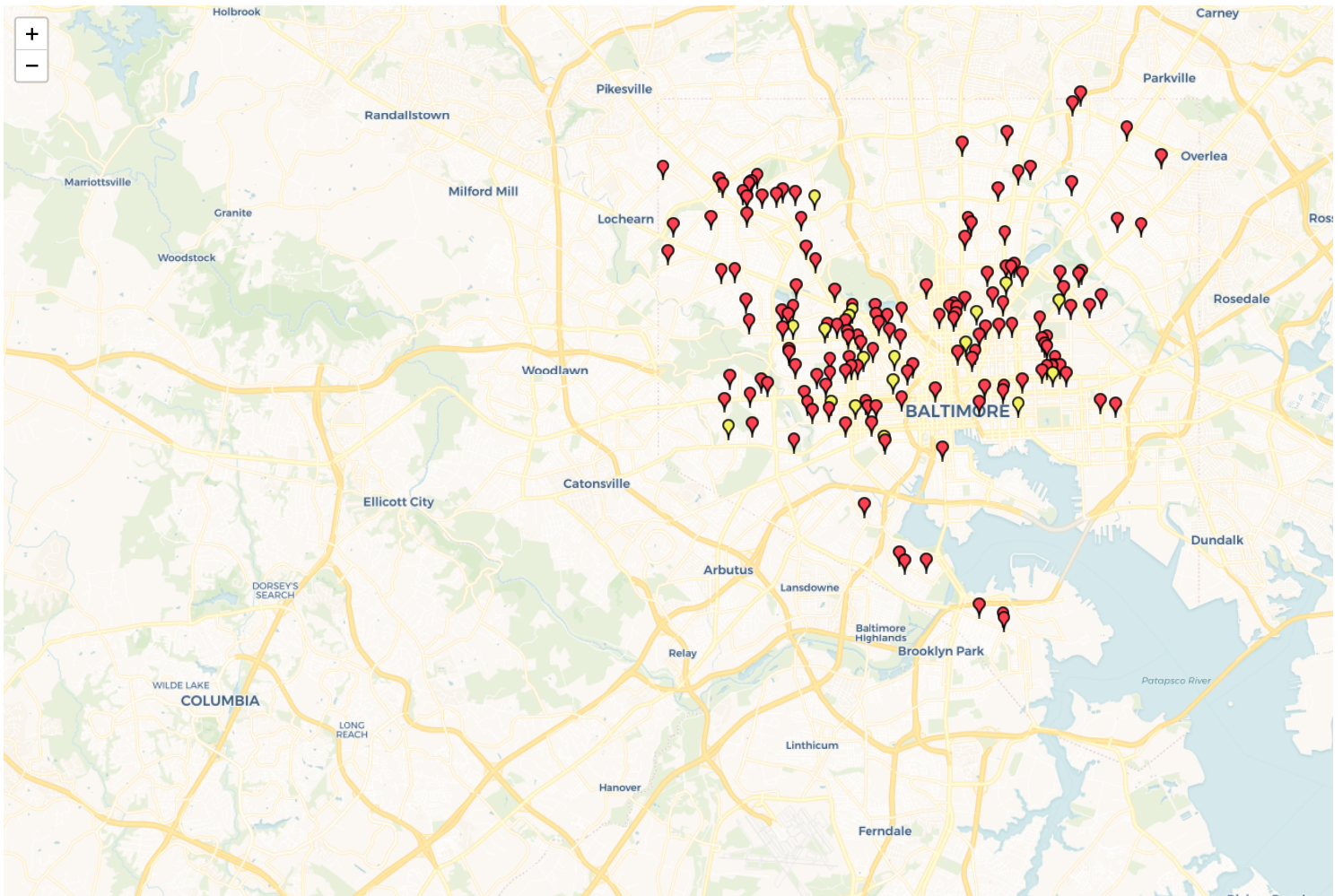
All

Cause of death

Shooting

Name

189 reported homicides fit the search criteria.



BALTIMORE HOMICIDES

Use the filters to choose which Baltimore homicides since 2007 appear on the map. Click or tap a point for more info on that homicide.

RESET

Time frame

All of 2014

Age

All

District

All

Gender

All

ZIP code

All

Race

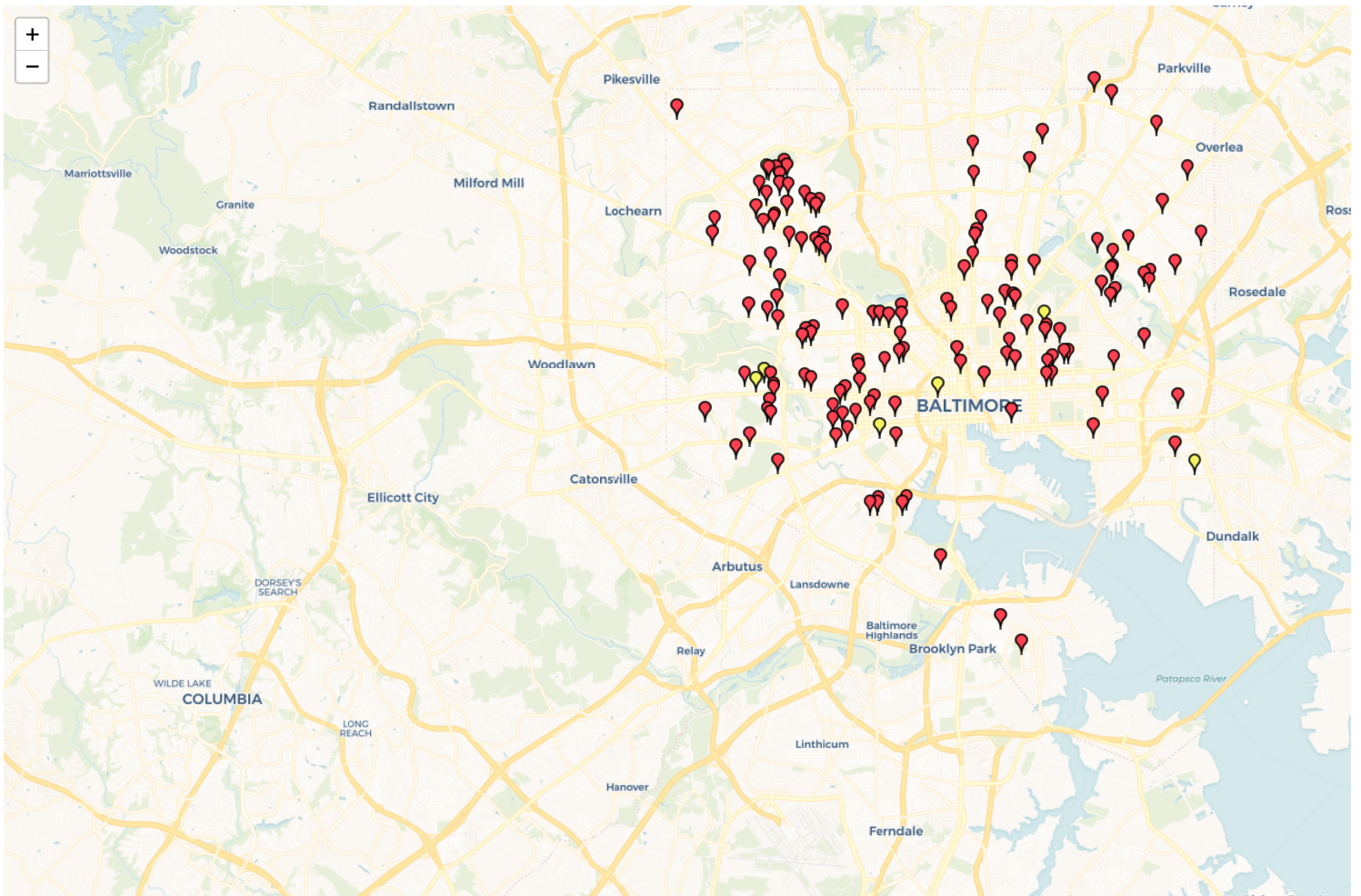
All

Cause of death

Shooting

Name

160 reported homicides fit the search criteria.



BALTIMORE HOMICIDES

Use the filters to choose which Baltimore homicides since 2007 appear on the map. Click or tap a point for more info on that homicide.

RESET

Time frame

All of 2015

Age

All

District

All

Gender

All

ZIP code

All

Race

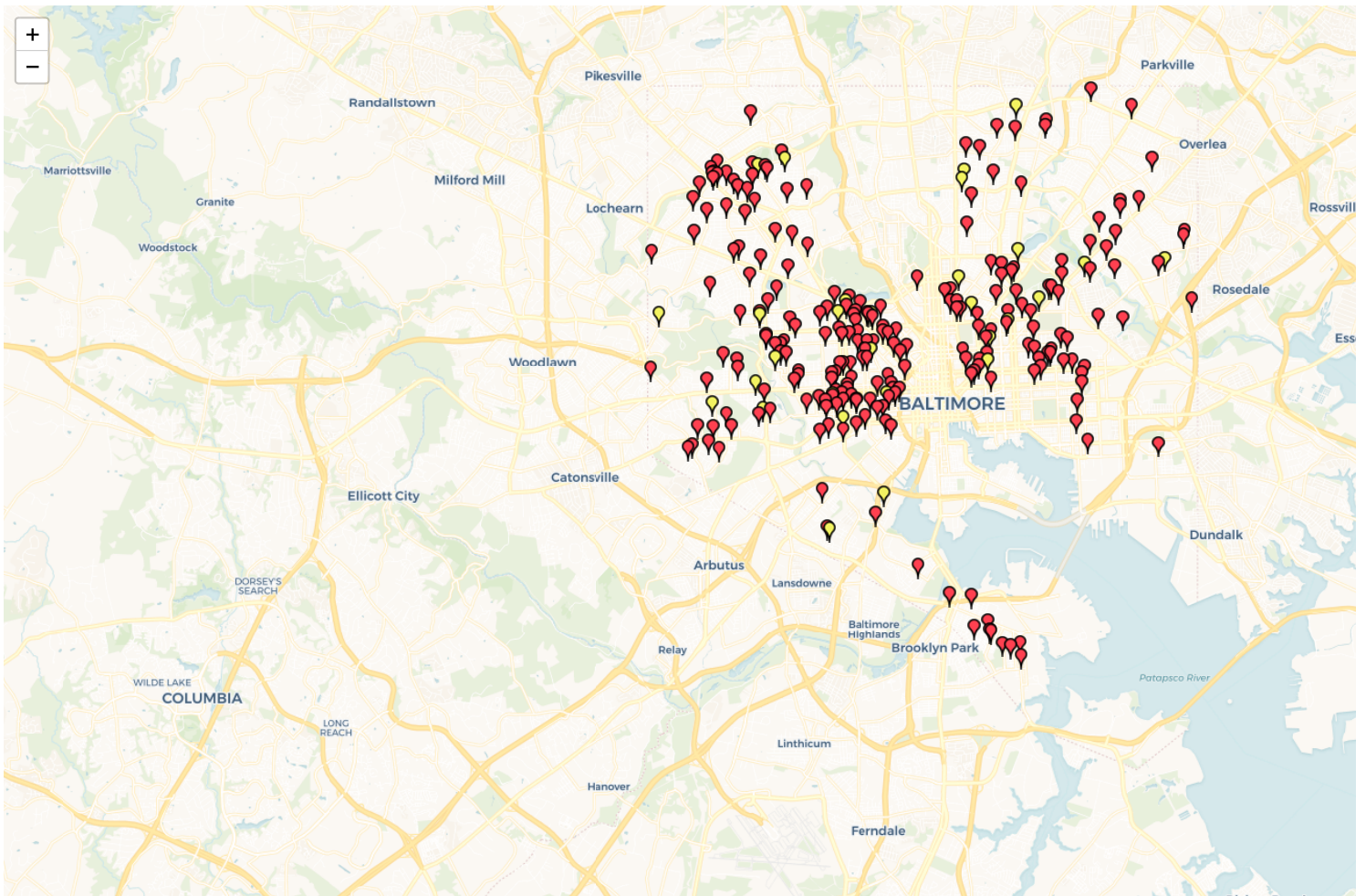
All

Cause of death

Shooting

Name

299 reported homicides fit the search criteria.



BALTIMORE HOMICIDES

Use the filters to choose which Baltimore homicides since 2007 appear on the map. Click or tap a point for more info on that homicide.

RESET

Time frame

All of 2016

Age

All

District

All

Gender

All

ZIP code

All

Race

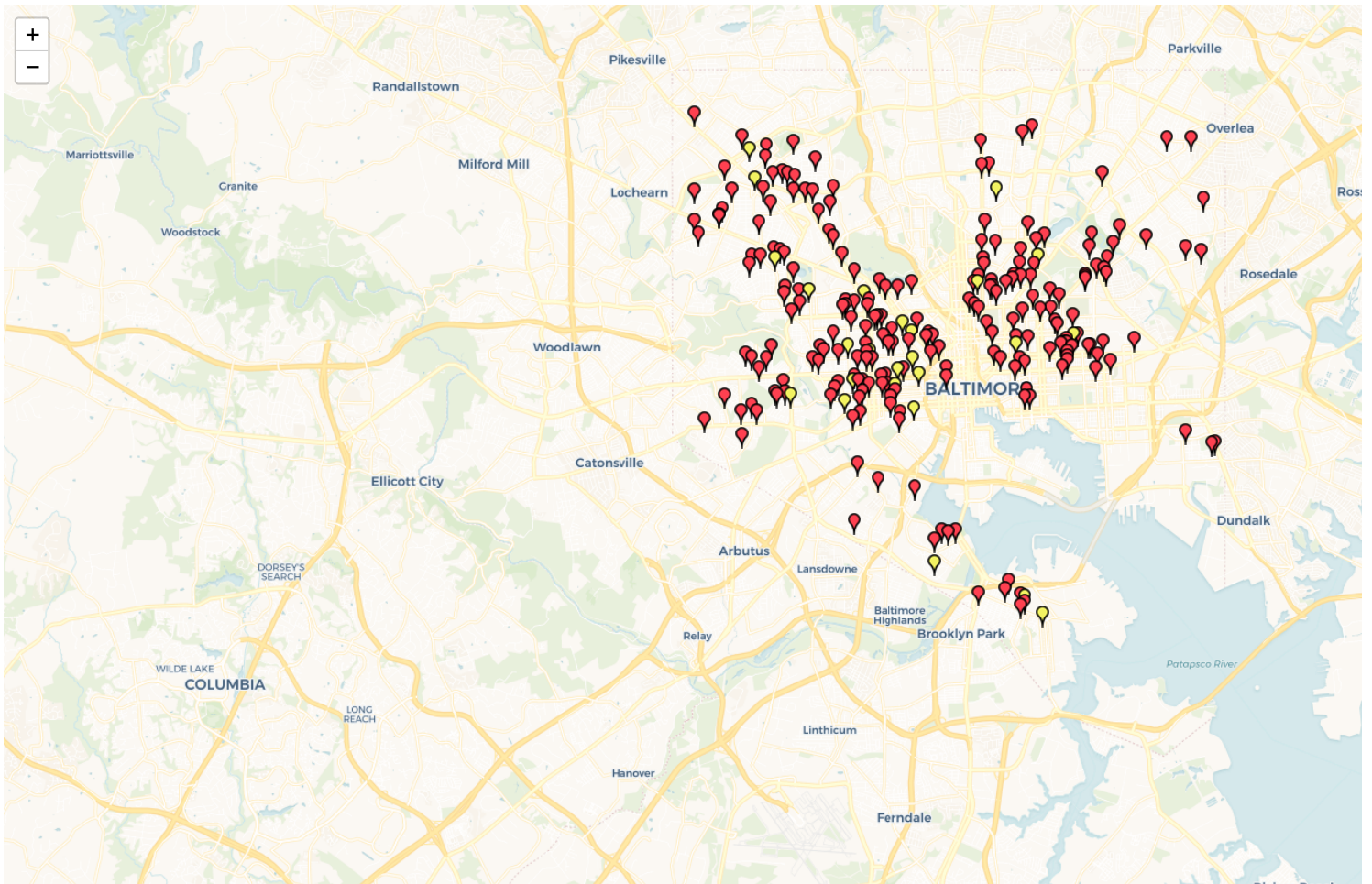
All

Cause of death

Shooting

Name

275 reported homicides fit the search criteria.



BALTIMORE HOMICIDES

Use the filters to choose which Baltimore homicides since 2007 appear on the map. Click or tap a point for more info on that homicide.

RESET

Time frame

All of 2017

Age

All

District

All

Gender

All

ZIP code

All

Race

All

Cause of death

Shooting

Name

299 reported homicides fit the search criteria.

