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**Written Testimony Submitted for the Record to the  
Maryland Senate  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Public Safety - Rifles and Shotguns - Secondary Transactions (SB 208)**

**February 5, 2020**

**SUPPORT**

Maryland PTA is the state's oldest and largest child advocacy organization that serves as a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families, schools and communities and a strong advocate for public education. We represent thousands of volunteer members in 900 public schools and we are comprised of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business as well as community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and family engagement in Maryland. For 105 years, our mission has been to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

Maryland PTA submits this testimony in support of Senate Bill 208 (SB 208), prohibiting certain transfers or sales of a rifle or shotgun after the original purchase from a licensed dealer, unless the transferor and transferee to meet jointly with a licensed dealer and request that the dealer facilitate the sale. SB 208 would also require a licensed dealer to take certain actions when facilitating a transfer and provide penalties in case the law is violated.

SB 208 aligns with Maryland PTA's efforts to protect children and youth from gun violence. It would ensure the secondary transfer or sale of rifles and shotguns include a background check. Maryland law has required background checks for firearm sales and transfers for over 20 years. The same should be true for secondhand sales of rifles and shotguns, which are every bit as deadly as handguns. Background checks are associated with reduced rates of firearm homicide, suicide and firearm trafficking, and they are the backbone of any comprehensive gun violence prevention policy.

SB 208 would close a dangerous loophole that allows people to buy shotguns and rifles without a background check when buying them from a private or unlicensed vendor. States with laws requiring background checks for all gun sales are associated with 10 percent lower homicide rates<sup>1</sup>, 48 percent lower rates of gun trafficking in cities<sup>2</sup>, and 29 percent lower rates of gun trafficking across state lines.<sup>3</sup>

For the reasons stated above, Maryland PTA supports Senate Bill 208 and recommends a favorable vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dr. Edna Harvin Battle  
President

References:

- 1) Siegel M, Boine C. What are the most effective policies in reducing firearm homicides? Rockefeller Government Institute. 2019.
- 2) Webster DW, Vernick JS, Bulzacchelli MT. Effects of state-level firearm seller accountability policies on firearm trafficking. *Journal of Urban Health*. 2009. 86(4):525–537.
- 3) Federal law bars felons from having firearms, but does not bar misdemeanors outside the domestic violence context. Webster DW, Vernick JS, McGinty EE, & Alcorn T. Preventing the diversion of guns to criminals through effective firearm sales laws. In *Reducing Gun Violence in America: Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis*. 2013. Vol. 9781421411118, pp. 109-121.