



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

January 15, 2020

HB 4

Public Safety – Rifles and Shotguns – Secondary Transactions

House Judiciary Committee

Position: Support

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch)dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

House Bill 4 requires that all transfers of rifles and shotguns be facilitated through a licensed dealer, and that dealer must conduct a background check and follow all relevant laws and regulations related to the transfer of the firearm.

The Catholic Church has a strong interest in public safety and keeping communities safe. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states in response to rising violence that “[w]e have an obligation to respond. Violence – in our homes, our schools and streets, our nation and world – is destroying the lives, dignity and hopes of millions of our sisters and brothers.”

In practice, the Conference supports legislation that aims to remove lethal weapons that endanger entire communities. When community members are not in fear of their lives, they can live up to their God-given potential and enrich the world around them. Every person has a right to life, and the Conference will continue to work to combat violence and promote a culture of peace.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 4.