



POSITION STATEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 591 -- PUBLIC SAFETY - LOST OR STOLEN REGULATED FIREARM - REPORTING

March 3, 2020

**DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

Position: Support

House Bill 591 establishes the penalties for a first conviction of failing to report a lost or stolen gun to imprisonment not to exceed six months or a fine not exceeding \$1,000. For each subsequent conviction, the bill stipulates imprisonment shall not exceed one year or a fine not exceeding \$2,000, or both.

Gun thefts and loss of guns are a significant problem in the United States. According to the National Crime Information Center, which is part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, 249,501 firearms were reported lost or stolen in 2016, an increase of more than 62 percent over 2007. In the most recent 10-year period where data is available, at least 1.9 million guns were lost or stolen.

Current penalties are often insufficient to deter people from failing to report a lost or stolen firearm. House Bill 591 acknowledges this issue by altering fines and imprisonment guidelines for failing to report a lost or stolen guns. It is imperative that Maryland have adequate penalties for failing to report lost or stolen firearms to law enforcement because there is no federal statute regarding this issue.

In the Greater Baltimore Committee's *2020 Legislative Priorities*, improving public safety in Baltimore City is identified as a priority, stating that, "violent crime and public safety concerns threaten the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of our communities. Persistent violent crime rates in Baltimore City require strategic action by state and city officials." The increased penalties in this bill for failing to report lost or stolen firearms are an important step to reduce violent crime.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on House Bill 591.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 65-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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