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HB 773
Public Safety – Firearms Telematics – Study
UNFAVORABLE

If the intent is, and always will be, limited to the use and installation of such devices on only those firearms owned by law enforcement agencies, we would have no strong objection. Law enforcement is free to do as it wishes with its own property within legal limits.

However, we strongly believe that HB 773 is a steppingstone to additional restrictions on the private ownership of firearms. It is clear from the Sponsor's past testimony that the goal of this Bill was and still is electronically monitoring the law-abiding citizens of Maryland.

HB 773 is the harbinger of a dystopian society the likes of which George Orwell predicted in his classic novel "*1984;*" in which the government of Maryland now assumes the role of "Big Brother."

Major issues such as invasion of personal privacy and warrantless surveillance are involved.

To believe that citizens will not object is foolish. The very first thing that happens when a law-abiding citizen purchases a firearm will be the removal of the device. The argument that such a device will help locate stolen firearms is naïve and presumes that thieves will not simply wrap the firearm in metal foil to defeat tracking. Even simple issues such as replacing batteries will defeat the system. Faulty and/or dead batteries in smoke detectors are common. Does the Sponsor really believe the same issue will not defeat the tracking devices? Are mandatory recalls to replace batteries to become common this brave new world?

The Sponsor's own testimony in 2020 that "firearm telematics can be used to ensure unauthorized persons are not firing a gun" clearly demonstrates that there are no limits to the amount of control envisioned in the future.

The members of the Maryland Handgun Roster Board are all volunteers and to burden them with the responsibility of a new research project is unfair and counterproductive.

We request an unfavorable report on HB 773.

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