



**Testimony in Support of Maryland Medical Assistance Program -
Community Violence Prevention Services
SB 350/HB 1005
Legislative Director Karen Herren, JD
Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence**

February 22, 2021

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice-Chair Feldman and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence is a statewide, grassroots organization dedicated to reducing gun deaths and injuries throughout the state of Maryland. MPGCV has a particular focus on reducing urban gun violence and gun suicide. **We urge the committee for a FAVORABLE report on SB 350 to require the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide community violence prevention services.**

We know that victims of gun violence are far more likely to either perpetuate more violence or ultimately die from gun violence. We also know that when victims get the care that they need, beyond the most immediate medical attention, that their odds of being able to go on to lead long and socially productive lives increase dramatically. Unfortunately, funding for many of these behavioral health and violence prevention services is not stable causing uncertainty in the system and gaps in the care available. Authorizing Medicaid funding for these wrap-around services will inject a stable source of funding and allow these programs to stabilize and grow thus extending the benefits to the community at large. Gun violence costs Maryland around \$6 billion each year, of which \$376 million is paid by taxpayers. Individual taxpayers in the state of Maryland pay about \$949 each year. Providing stable wraparound services for violence prevention services could save both lives and money.

MPGCV supports SB 350 and asks this committee for a Favorable report.