



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Chief of Staff David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 9, 2022

RE: **HB 425 Public Safety – Public Safety - Untraceable Firearms**

POSITION: **LETTER OF INFORMATION**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) supports legislative efforts to remove firearms from those individuals who would use those weapons to commit crimes and bring harm upon our communities. The MCPA is equally concerned with the preservation of individual rights to bear arms afforded under the Constitution. Striking that delicate balance is imperative.

Maryland, like the rest of the country, has witnessed a proliferation of untraceable firearms, commonly referred to as ghost guns, used by the criminal element to commit crimes of violence. Seizures of these types of weapons has increased over the last several years.

HB 425 prohibits possession of a firearm unless the firearm has been imprinted by a federally licensed firearms dealer or other federal licensee authorized to provide marking services with the first three and last five digits of the licensee's federal firearms license number, followed by a hyphen, and then followed by another number. However, HB 425 only grandfathered firearms manufactured before 1968. This provision will make it unlawful for anyone to possess a weapon in violation of this statute after January 1, 2023, even though possession of these weapons is legal under current statute.

The MCPA is concerned that HB 425 has the effect of placing law-abiding citizens in violation of this statute, thereby subjecting them to possible criminal prosecution. The MCPA offers this information for consideration of amendments to preclude unintended consequences.