



POSITION STATEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 425 – PUBLIC SAFETY – UNTRACEABLE FIREARMS

Sponsor - The Speaker (By Request - Office of the Attorney General) and Delegate Lopez

February 9, 2022

DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

Position: Support

House Bill 425 would alter the definition of “firearm” to include an unfinished frame or receiver that has reached a stage in manufacturing where it can readily be completed, assembled, or converted into a functional firearm. This would subject these untraceable guns, known as “ghost guns”, to the same federal laws and regulations that are applicable to all other firearms, including the requirement that it be properly licensed and registered.

The proliferation of “ghost guns” has added to the unacceptable levels of gun violence in the state. Last year alone, Baltimore City police seized 345 ghost guns. In 2018, only 12 ghost guns were seized. Baltimore Police Commissioner Michael Harrison projects that the numbers of ghost guns seized will more than double this year, with the city on track to seize 700 ghost guns. Similar increases in ghost gun recoveries are occurring across the state. Prince George’s County reports that 264 untraceable guns were seized in 2021, a dramatic increase from only 27 ghost guns recovered in 2019.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports House Bill 425 because data shows that ghost guns are a growing threat to the safety of Marylanders. The removal of that threat is a necessary step to improve public safety. Violent crime and public safety concerns threaten the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of our communities. Decisive and strategic action by state and local officials is critical; passage of this bill targeting unregistered ghost guns fits that description.

The GBC contends that House Bill 425 will make a tangible difference toward improving public safety throughout the State of Maryland.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on House Bill 425.

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 67-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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