



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0387:

Public Safety – Untraceable Firearms

****FAVORABLE****

February 16, 2022

TO: President Ferguson and Members of the Senate

FROM: The Rev. Kenneth O. Phelps Jr', Co-Chair of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

Non-violence is at the core of Christian faith and practice. The teachings of Jesus – as contained in the New Testament – call the faithful to a rejection of a system of retribution and righteous violence and into an alternative way of living that is based on unconditional love of neighbor and accountability for the common good.

We cannot normalize violence or contemplate its use ever as being for the right. And, we do not believe that the answer to escalating gun violence is an increase in the number of guns on the street.

Over the years, our bishops have called for common sense gun safety measures that enjoy the support of gun owners and non-gun owners alike: handgun purchaser licensing; background checks on all gun purchasers; restrictions on gun ownership by domestic abusers; classification of gun trafficking as a federal crime; encouragement for the development of “smart gun” technology; and, federal funding for research into gun violence prevention strategies. Our Church has passed numerous resolutions calling for many of these measures.

We now add to that list our support of this ban on the production, possession or sale of all untraceable firearms.

California Law Enforcement reports that untraceable guns were used in several rampages in their schools killing a total of 13 people in the last several years.

We urge a favorable report.