



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

February 07, 2023

SB 159

Firearms - Maryland Voluntary Do Not Sell Firearm Registry - Establishment

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Position: Favorable

The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 159 requires the Department of State Police to create and maintain a Maryland Voluntary Do Not Sell Firearm Registry in which a person may voluntarily enroll for the purpose of being prohibited from obtaining a firearm and prohibits a dealer or other person from selling, renting, loaning, or transferring a firearm to a purchaser, lessee, borrower, or transferee who the dealer or other person knows or has reason to believe is registered on the registry.

The Catholic Church has a strong interest in public safety and keeping communities safe. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states in response to rising violence that “[w]e have an obligation to respond. Violence – in our homes, our schools and streets, our nation and world – is destroying the lives, dignity and hopes of millions of our sisters and brothers.” To that point, the Church supports legislation that controls and strengthens regulations on firearms, and other such legislation that makes our communities safer. When community members are not in fear of their lives, they can live up to their God-given potential and enrich the world around them. Every person has a right to life, and the Conference will continue to work to combat violence and promote a culture of peace.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and respectfully urges a **favorable** report for Senate Bill 159.