

SB159 – Firearms - Maryland Voluntary Do Not Sell Firearm Registry – Establishment
February 7, 2023

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Testimony of Martha Nathanson, Vice President, Government Relations and Community Development;
Adam Rosenberg, Vice President, Violence Intervention and Prevention

Position: **SUPPORT**

We are pleased to **SUPPORT** SB159, which would create a registry in which a person could voluntarily enroll for the purpose of being prohibited from obtaining a firearm in Maryland.

LifeBridge Health is a regional health system comprising Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, an independent academic medical center; Levindale Geriatric Center and Hospital in Baltimore; Northwest Hospital, a community hospital in Baltimore County; Carroll Hospital, a sole community hospital in Carroll County, and; Grace Medical Center in Baltimore (formerly Bon Secours Hospital).

LifeBridge also operates the Center for Hope, a comprehensive crisis and violence intervention center that serves the Baltimore region. We work daily with people dealing with trauma and violence.

Voluntary firearm registries are a self-selecting tool to prevent suicide by firearm. Utah, Washington state, and Virginia have passed similar laws that give people the option to add their names voluntarily and confidentially to a state system that prevents them from impulsively purchasing a gun. The model is similar to that of gambling registries in many states: many people know the limits to their own mental health, and want to protect themselves and others from what they may do in less stable moments.

As advocates for a similar law pointed out, “easy access to guns during a suicidal crisis is a recipe for tragedy.”¹ Data show that guns are lethal 90 percent of the time, whereas attempts with the other most commonly used methods of suicide are lethal less than 2 percent of the time.²

We urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB159.

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¹ “Fredrick Vars and Bryan Barks: Utah’s voluntary do-not-sell firearms law can save lives,” [Salt Lake Tribune](#), July 7, 2021)

² Id.