



Governor's Family Violence Council

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Chair

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February 7, 2023

Chairman William C. Smith, Jr. and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
2 East
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SENATE BILL 185 – Maryland State Police Gun Center – Firearms Surrendered
Under Final Protective Orders**
POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

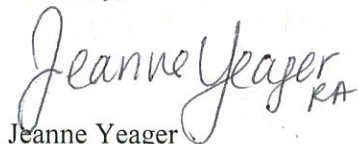
The Governor's Family Violence Council supports Senate Bill 185, a bill that alters the purpose of the Maryland State Police Gun Center to include the tracking, screening, and vetting of all firearms surrendered under final protective orders in the State. Additionally, each law enforcement agency would be required to report to the Center the number and type of firearms surrendered, the jurisdictions where the firearms were surrendered, and certain information regarding the individual who surrendered each firearm under final protective orders.

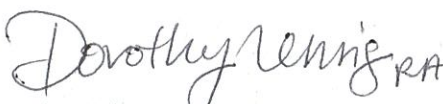
One of the most important safety tools victims of domestic violence use is the protective order. Every final protective order requires the respondent to surrender their firearms to law enforcement. Domestic violence advocates have long been concerned that respondents are not surrendering all of their firearms. There have been several high profile cases where respondents have either not surrendered their firearms or only surrendered some of their firearms and subsequently shot and killed their victims. Currently, different law enforcement agencies have different protocols for tracking the surrender of firearms. Last year, the Maryland General Assembly passed SB 861 which created the Maryland State Police Gun Center. The Center is "a statewide firearms enforcement center for the tracking, screening, and vetting of all firearm crimes committed in the state." Senate Bill 185 would expand the role of the Center to require each law enforcement agency to report to the Center information about firearms surrendered pursuant to a final protective order. It would be the first step in analyzing whether our current system of protective order gun surrendering is effective.

If enacted, this bill will give us data about whether Maryland is effectively getting firearms out of the hands of respondents in final protective orders. Senate Bill 185 aligns with the mission of the Governor's Family Violence Council which is to provide recommendations that will reduce and eliminate abusive behaviors.

For these reasons, the Governor's Family Violence Council urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 185.

Sincerely,


Jeanne Yeager
Chair


Dorothy Lennig, Esq.
Vice-Chair