

## **SB113/HB 259 Industry Accountability**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Waldstreicher and Delegate Atterbeary

**Committee:** Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and House Judiciary Committee

**Organization Submitting:** Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

**Person Submitting:** Dr. Nicole Hollywood, LSPC

**Position: FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB113/HB259 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

Since 2005, a federal law called the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (“PLCAA”) has shielded bad actor gun manufacturers and dealers from most lawsuits, creating a culture of impunity within the industry. PLCAA blocks legal responsibility for gun manufacturers that have failed to prevent unintentional shootings by innovating and making guns safer, and for irresponsible, reckless, and negligent sales practices that contribute to the flood of illegal firearms in our communities.

No other industry receives the protections afforded to gun manufacturers. PLCAA stops most litigation that could incentivize gun manufacturers to design their products more safely, including the addition of simple safety features that have been available for years that could prevent unauthorized access by children and teens. PLCAA also blocks legal claims that could compel gunmakers to stop selling to those dealers who fuel the criminal market, have poor safety practices or training, or are not willing to use basic security measures or record every sale on video.

This legislation will help victims of gun violence, their families and the state of Maryland hold bad actors in the gun industry accountable by creating a path to civil liability when their misconduct and negligence causes harm in our State. This bill works within the scope of the federal law by creating new state standards applicable to the sale and marketing of firearms. These new minimum standards which gun industry members will encompass minimal preventative measures to thwart thefts, straw purchases, and sales to prohibited purchasers or those likely to harm themselves or others—and prohibit any conduct that creates or contributes to dangers that harm Marylanders.

The Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.