

SB1 – Criminal Law - Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms - Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)
February 7, 2023

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

Position: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

We are pleased to **SUPPORT** SB1, which would prevent a person from knowingly wearing, carrying, or transporting a firearm on another person’s property or within 100 feet of a place of public accommodation. We support proposed amendments that would expand this bill’s protections to private and non-profit health care settings, such as hospitals, clinics, nursing homes.

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 violence intervention center that serves the Baltimore region.

Unfortunately, health care settings are often sites of violence. The risk of being a victim of workplace violence is at least 20% higher for health care workers than other workers.¹ COVID-19 has worsened incidents of healthcare workplace violence,² with over 66% of emergency room doctors reported having been assaulted in between 2021 and 2022.³ Hospital shootings are also on the rise.⁴

Meanwhile, guns are becoming even more prevalent since this summer, when the U.S. Supreme Court in *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association (NYSRPA) v. Bruen* declared unconstitutional New York’s “proper cause” requirement for issuance of a permit to carry a handgun. As the Maryland State Police reported to this committee last month, state handgun “wear and carry” applications have exploded from about 18,000 per year to about 18,000 per month since *Bruen*.

In Maryland, the Montgomery County Council passed a law prohibiting wearing and carrying firearms within 100 yards of “sensitive places” such as hospitals, daycares, and other care facilities.

We urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB1.

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¹ The Joint Commission. (April 17, 2018). Sentinel Event Alert: Physical and Verbal Violence Against Health Care Workers.

² *Hospital Workplace Violence and Intimidation Factsheet*, American Hospital Association, (July 2022)

³ Poll: Increasing Violence in Emergency Departments Contributes to Physician Burnout and Impacts Patient Care, American College of Emergency Physicians (September 2022)

⁴ “Deadly assaults on US medical workers on the rise,” *USA Today* (June 3, 2022)