



March 09, 2023

House Judiciary Committee,
Chairman, Luke Clippinger

**Support for HB1041 – Criminal Procedure – Pretrial Release Restrictions –
Firearm Crimes**

Attention Chairman Clippinger, Vice-Chair Moon and members of the committee:

I am writing to express my **support for HB1041 – Criminal Procedure – Pretrial Release Restrictions – Firearm Crimes.**

This bill will enhance the policies and prosecutorial goals of the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office by adding an additional tool in our toolbox by authorizing those men and women appointed and/or elected to the bench to be the final and only authoritative voice as it relates to the pretrial release of someone caught illegally possessing a firearm.

As you've heard from me on several occasions this session, gun safety is a cornerstone of my administration, and I will continue to push for common sense policies such as HB1041 that keep the citizens of this great state, and the city that I represent, safe from the harm that can come from irresponsible gun owners and/or those who obtain these weapons by illegal means.

HB1041 is a measured approach to addressing a serious and rising issue in our communities, effectively striking the right balance of protecting the lives of area residents and ensuring public safety, while also guaranteeing the individual rights of those accused of said crime.

Make no mistake, this bill does not, in any way, shape or form, prohibit those charged with said crimes from being released on some form of bond or pretrial release, and does not automatically detain an individual; but rather takes the authority of releasing those charged with transporting a regulated firearm for illegal sale or trafficking, participating in a straw purchase of a regulated firearm, or possessing an un-serialized firearm or unfinished frame or receiver, from being released from incarceration by a District Commissioner.

As you know, the rise of ghost guns in our communities, as well as the gun crisis that continues to plague Baltimore City and the counties across the great state of Maryland, has brought about a renewed spirit of ensuring that we are holding these offenders accountable for their actions. And with the rebuttable presumption that a defendant charged with such a crime will flee and pose a greater danger to our community, we must ensure that we put roadblocks in place to prevent this from happening.



I would urge a favorable vote on this bill, and thank you for your time and consideration. I pray for your continued health and well-being, and I appreciate the service you provide to our great state, along with the level of engagement and commitment you provide to our communities on a daily basis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ivan J. Bates", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ivan J. Bates, Esq.
State's Attorney for Baltimore City