



Bill No: HB869
Title: Public Safety – Firearm Background Checks, Victim Notification, and the Maryland State Police Gun Center
Committee: Judiciary
Hearing: February 21, 2024
Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women’s groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW’s purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. **HB869 - Public Safety – Firearm Background Checks, Victim Notification, and the Maryland State Police Gun Center** is a priority on the [2024 MLAW Agenda](#) and we urge your support.

HB869 bill would require law enforcement and victim notification if a prohibited person attempts to purchase a firearm and fails the background check.

According to the National Instant Criminal Background Check (NICS) data there were over 3,800 federal denials for persons attempting to purchase a firearm that were prohibited by law from doing so. Maryland is a partial point of contact state for NICS checks. Therefore, in Maryland, the State Police handle background checks on handguns and assault-style weapons, while the FBI handles background checks for other long guns. It is imperative that there be laws and a process in place in Maryland for when a prohibited person attempts to lawfully purchase a firearm and fails a background check and that the victim be notified of the attempted purchase. The risk of homicide for women increases by 500% with the presence of a gun in the home. In Maryland, there were 56 domestic violence fatalities in 2022 and 75% of those deaths were caused by a firearm.

Maryland is an outlier since we are a partial point of contact state and conduct background checks on handguns and assault-style weapons but do not have a process or law in place for when a person fails a background check that ensures that local law enforcement and the victim is notified. This bill would establish a requirement and process for law enforcement and victim notification when a person fails a background check conducted by Maryland State Police. Notification of local law enforcement and victims creates an opportunity to intervene and prevent future violence. An individual becomes a prohibited person when they are the Respondent on a final protective order in Maryland. Most intimate partner homicides are committed with firearms and nationally an average of 70 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner a month. Establishing in statute notification requirements for local law enforcement and victim notification would save women’s lives.

For these reasons, MLAW strongly urges the passage of HB869.

MLAW 2024 Supporting Organizations

The following organizations have signed on in support of our 2024 Legislative Agenda:

1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East
AAUW Anne Arundel County
AAUW Garrett Branch
AAUW Kensington-Rockville Branch
AAUW Maryland
Adolescent Single Parent Program (PGCPS)
Anne Arundel County Commission for Women
Anne Arundel County NOW
Baltimore County Commission for Women
Black Women for Positive Change, Baltimore Chapter
Bound for Better, Advocates for Domestic Violence
Bound for Better, advocates for Domestic Violence
Business & Professional Women/Maryland
Center for Infant & Child Loss
Child Justice, Inc.
Church Women United, Inc.
Climate XChange Maryland
Court Watch Montgomery
CTLDomGroup Inc
DABS Consulting, LLC
Engage Mountain Maryland
Frederick County Commission For Women
If/When/How at University of Baltimore School of Law
Lee Law, LLC
Les Etoiles in Haiti
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maryland Legislative Coalition
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Maryland WISE Women
Miller Partnership Consultants
MomsRising
Montgomery County Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Montgomery County NOW
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc., Anne Arundel County Chapter
National Organization for Women, Maryland Chapter
Rebuild, Overcome, and Rise (ROAR) Center at UMB
REHarrington Plumbing and Heating
Reproductive Justice Maryland
Stella's Girls Inc
The Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations of Maryland
The Hackerman Foundation
The Relentless Feminist
The Salvation Army Catherine's Cottage
Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., Patuxent River
Top Ladies of Distinction, Prince George's County
TurnAround Inc.
University System of Maryland Women's Forum
Women of Action Maryland
Women's Equity Center and Action Network (WE CAN)
Women's Law Center of Maryland
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporate - Alpha Zeta Chapter
Zonta Club of Annapolis

Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

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