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To: Members of the Senate Finance Committee
From: Doyle Niemann, Chair, Legislative Committee, Criminal Law and Practice Section,
Maryland State Bar Association
Subject: **SB475 – Center for Firearm Violence Prevention Establishment**
Date: February 28, 2024
Position: **Favorable**

The Legislative Committee of the Criminal Law & Practice Section of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **Supports SB475 - Center for Firearm Violence Prevention - Establishment.**

This bill will establish a Center for Firearm Violence Prevention in the Maryland Department of Health. As stated in the bill, its purpose is to reduce firearm violence, the harm from firearm violence and misuse of firearms in the state. It envisions partnerships with federal, state and local agencies and local communities – all with a goal of implementing a public health approach to firearm violence.

There are few issues of greater importance today that reducing firearm violence at every level of society. Far too many people have been or will be victims of firearms. While the misuse of firearms is a criminal matter, preventing that misuse and helping individuals and communities cope with firearm violence are compelling public health issues. The proposed Center for Firearm Violence Prevention is a useful step in the process of mobilizing our resources to stop needless violence from the misuse of firearms.

For the reasons stated, we Support SB475 - Center for Firearm Violence Prevention – Establishment. If you have questions about the position of the Criminal Law and Practice Section’s Legislative Committee, please feel free to address them to me at 240-606-1298 or at doyleniemann@gmail.com.

Should you have other questions, please contact The MSBA’s Legislative Office at (410) 387-5606.