



TESTIMONY FOR SB0475
Center for Firearm Violence Prevention - Establishment

Bill Sponsor: President

Committee: Finance

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0475 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Firearm violence is escalating across the country due to the proliferation of firearms and the lack of laws that restrict use. Mass shootings are becoming commonplace and the number of residents, including children, who have died as a result of firearm violence has risen almost exponentially. Firearm violence has risen to the level of a public health crisis and we should treat it as such.

This bill, if enacted, would establish the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention in the Maryland Department of Health to reduce firearm violence, and misuse of firearms in the State by partnering with federal, State, and local agencies and affected communities to implement a public health approach to firearm violence reduction. It also requires the Center to submit a preliminary State Plan for a public health approach to reducing firearm violence by May 1, 2025.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.