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February 26, 2024

The Honorable Will Smith
Chairman, Judicial Proceedings Committee
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

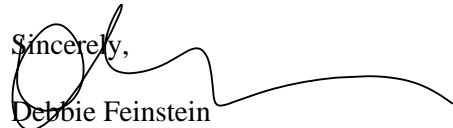
On behalf of the Maryland State's Attorney's Association, I write in support of SB753, Public Safety—Firearm Background Checks, Victim Notification, and the Maryland State Police Gun Center. I am the Chief of the Special Victims Division for the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office and I chair the Montgomery County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team. I am a member of the Governor's Family Violence Council and chair of the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association's Special Victims' Subcommittee, which includes representatives from jurisdictions across the state.

In 2022, 35 adults and 5 children were victims of domestic violence homicide in Maryland. An additional 16 people were killed as a result of domestic violence, including abusive partners. Seventy-five of the deaths were caused by a gun. Moreover, the risk of homicide for women increases by 500% with the presence of a gun in the home.

Senate Bill 753 closes a gap in Maryland law. Currently, if a protective order prohibits an abuser from purchasing or possessing a firearm, the victim is not notified if the respondent tries to legally purchase a firearm and is denied. House Bill 869 requires Maryland State Police to notify the victim if the respondent tries to legally purchase a firearm. This notification is critical to the safety and welfare of domestic violence victims. With prompt notification, victims can take necessary measures to protect themselves and their families.

I urge the House Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on SB753.

Sincerely,


Debbie Feinstein
Chief, Special Victims Division
Senior Assistant State's Attorney

Source: 2022-2023 Maryland Domestic Violence Fatality Review State Implementation Team Report, [2023 DVFRSIT Report \(mnadv.org\)](https://mnadv.org) (last visited February 19, 2024).