



## Testimony in **Support** of

Public Safety - Firearm Background Checks, Victim Notification, and the Maryland State Police Gun Center

SB753/HB869  
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Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence

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Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Bartlett, and distinguished members of the committee,

Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence (MPGV) is a statewide organization committed to reducing gun deaths and injuries across Maryland. We urge a FAVORABLE report on **House Bill 869**.

### **BACKGROUND:**

In the current process of purchasing firearms, individuals are required to complete federal form 4473 or Maryland state form 77R, followed by background checks through NICS or the Maryland State Police. However, when a background check fails, there are gaps in the system:

- The dealer may not proceed with the sale, but law enforcement is only notified when under the NICS system and there is no requirement to notify victims under either.
- Potential purchasers might seek alternative means to obtain firearms.
- In most cases, law enforcement and the victim remain uninformed, leaving victims unaware and vulnerable.

### **WHAT THIS BILL DOES:**

House Bill 869 mandates:

- Notification of background check denials to the Maryland State Police Gun Center.
- Record-keeping of background check denials by the Gun Center.
- Notification to local law enforcement.
- Updates to law enforcement if the denial status changes.
- Immediate victim notification if a prohibited person fails a background check.

### **WHY THIS MATTERS:**

Intimate partner violence and gun violence are deeply intertwined, affecting countless women, families, and communities nationwide. Firearms escalate the danger in abusive relationships, making victims five times more likely to be killed by their abusers. The statistics are alarming:

- Every month, 70 women are shot and killed by intimate partners.
- Nearly 1 million women report being shot or threatened by intimate partners.

- In over half of mass shootings, the perpetrator targeted an intimate partner or family member.
- American Indian, Black, and Latina women, along with pregnant and postpartum women, are disproportionately affected.
- Firearms are used in over half of all intimate partner homicides in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

**CONCLUSION:**

**House Bill 869** is crucial for ensuring victim safety and empowering law enforcement to intervene effectively. By notifying authorities of background check denials, we can prevent tragedies and protect vulnerable individuals. MPGV urges a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB869**.

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<sup>1</sup> [Domestic Violence & Firearms | Giffords](#)