



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William Smith Jr., Chair and
Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Samira Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 19, 2025

RE: **SB 943 Family and Law Enforcement Protection Act**

POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 943 WITH AMENDMENTS.**

Under current law, individuals may file to seek a domestic violence protective order if experiencing abuse in a relationship. If a judge determines the petitioner may be harmed by the respondent, the judge may order the respondent to surrender his or her firearms at the temporary protective order stage. If a final protective order is issued, the respondent is required to surrender any firearms in the respondent's possession for the duration of the order. SB 943 alters this process and would require a respondent to surrender any firearms at the interim, temporary, and final protective order stage.

MCPA and MSA understand the urgency associated with seeking a protective order and the need to keep the petitioner safe from harm. However, MCPA and MSA are concerned with the mandatory surrender of firearms at the interim protective stage as this stage lacks judicial review and could result in the firearms being returned to the respondent in a few days following the temporary protective order hearing if the temporary order does not move forward to a final hearing. These hearings are typically held within two days of an interim protective order being issued. Managing this process would be difficult given resources. MCPA and MSA respectfully request this requirement be struck from the bill.

MCPA and MSA would also like to clarify that a firearm should be disposed of in accordance with §5-118 of the Public Safety Article. On page 10, in line (13) following (E) insert "IN ACCORDANCE WITH PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE §5-118,".

For these reasons, MCPA and MSA respectfully **SUPPORT SB 943 WITH AMENDMENTS** and requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** Committee report.

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