

HB0180_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

03/05/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703-7134

TESTIMONY ON HB#0180 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Public Safety - Gun Violence Victim Relocation Program – Establishment

TO: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of/ HB#/0180, Public Safety - Gun Violence Victim Relocation Program – Establishment

The intent of this bill is to create a program that offers essential assistance and comprehensive support to eligible victims and their families to ensure their safety and well-being through relocation. The purpose is to ameliorate immediate threats and psychological impacts, while providing a chance for victims to escape violent environments and rebuild their lives in a secure setting.

A comprehensive study of *Women escaping domestic violence to achieve safe housing: an integrative review* has come to the following conclusions: ¹

This review has highlighted the need for service and health care providers to work together and collaborate effectively with the woman experiencing and escaping domestic violence, especially in rural and remote areas. This means giving women access to the most suitable educational resources and services that are appropriate for their unique situation. Tailoring support for women is crucial to enable women to achieve safe housing and to be able to live a safe life with their children, away from the perpetrator of the domestic violence.

Based on these established conclusions this bill will, for Maryland, establish the Gun Violence Victim Relocation Program within the Victim Services Unit of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy to provide certain victims of gun violence certain services and assistance related to relocating for the safety of the victim or the victim's family. It will work on establishing the Gun Violence Victim Relocation Program Fund. The bill sets up the management structure for this by requiring the Victim Services Unit to establish a certain oversight commission. Finally, this bill will collect data on all of their efforts and require the Unit to submit a yearly status report on the Program by December 1, beginning in 2027, so that any needed adjustments can be enacted by the General Assembly.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0180.

¹ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11140925/>