



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair
Ways and Means Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: February 13, 2024
RE: HB387 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

The MLLC supports HB387 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB387.

According to the Center for American Progress, an estimated 74,522 Hispanic people in the United States, between 1999 to 2020, died from gun violence.¹ The number of Hispanic people who died due to gun violence is on the rise with this number increasing by 66 percent from 2014 to 2022. Particularly, these deaths are increasing at nearly twice the rate of gun deaths nationwide.² In 2019 and 2020, gun violence was the leading cause of death among Latino males ages 15-19, killing more Latino males than cancer and car crashes combined.³ According to a 2021 Everytown for Gun Safety report, Latinos in Maryland face nearly 2x as many gun homicides per 100,000 people compared to white Marylanders.⁴

The following bill places an 11% excise tax on federally licensed firearm retailers, which applies to the gross receipts from firearm sales. Revenues from the tax would be split equally between the Coordinated Community Supports Partnership Fund (which supports behavioral health interventions for students), Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund, the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant, and the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention.

Gun violence has become a top concern for Latino voters with 53 percent of Latino voters feeling ‘very concerned’ about gun violence in their communities.⁵ Survivors of gun violence are left with both mental and physical trauma and lack the financial resources and support to access the necessary recovery services.⁶ This bill works to reduce the trauma of gun violence and save more lives within the Latino community through substantial, sustained funding for gun violence prevention and treatment programs.

¹ [Gun Violence Has a Devastating Impact on Hispanic Communities](#)

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ [Gun Violence in Maryland](#)

⁵ [Gun Violence Has a Devastating Impact on Hispanic Communities](#)

⁶ [The price of a gunshot: Health impacts and the cost of violence on Latinos](#)

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB387.