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February 11, 2025

Honorable Members of the
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Md. 21401

**Subject: HB0387 Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act
OPPOSE**

Dear Honorable Delegates:

I represent the Western Maryland Sportsmen's Coalition, Inc. The Coalition is comprised of many hunting clubs and sportsmen's associations and thousands of their individual members living in Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick, and Carroll Counties. As President of the Coalition, I work together with the leadership of these Western Maryland Sportsmen's organizations for the recognition and benefit of the sportsmen and sportswomen of the five most western counties of Maryland.

On February 13th your committee will be hearing the advantages and disadvantages of HB-0387 (Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act). I, as a private citizen of this state and as the elected representative of the Western Maryland Sportsmen's Coalition, Inc. **strongly urge you to oppose HB-0387.**

Over the past decade, and more and more increasingly, there has been legislation proposed in our State Legislature that, in one form or fashion, is solely designed to discourage sportsmen and women from participating in any firearms related activity, be it hunting, trap and skeet shooting or other shooting competitions.

House Bill 0387 is another example of this never-ending endeavor. The firearms sportsmen and women of this state are already carrying the burden of a 10% federal excise tax on all handguns, an 11% federal excise tax on rifles, shotguns and ammunition and a state sales tax of 6% on all the above. There is even another bill in your committee right now proposing to double the state sales and use tax on the sale of all firearms, firearms accessories, and ammunition.

The passage of **HB-0387** will bring an additional back-breaking state excise tax of 11% to our sporting community on all firearms as a pass thru increase from FFL dealers. The Fiscal and Policy Note from previous years on nearly identical bills acknowledges that the additional tax burden to our sportsmen and sportswomen will be millions of dollars as a pass thru expense.

It seems tremendously unfair that that our hunting and shooting community has been targeted to financially support The Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund, the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, the Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund and other initiatives. Perhaps an additional tax on liquor or gasoline or gambling would be a more equitable way to achieve funding for these programs by spreading out the financial burden along a much wider consumer base.

Together with the sportsmen and sportswomen of Western Maryland, I strongly urge you to oppose HB-0387. (just another tax)

Respectfully,

Ben Kelkye

Ben Kelkye	President, WMSC, President Frederick County Sportsmen's Council
Jerry Zembower	President, Garrett & Allegany Sportsmen's Association
Joe Winter	President, Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
Matt Guilfoyle	President, Carroll County Sportsmen's Association

Garrett

Allegany

Washington

Frederick

Carroll