

Please find **UNFAVORABLE** HB 387
Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act

I strongly oppose this bill due to its unfair targeting of lawful firearm ownership. This approach singles out a constitutionally protected activity under the guise of public safety, while ignoring other potential contributors to risk and harm in our communities. While the word "comprehensive" is in the title of the bill, it is far from it in its arbitrariness. HB387 imposes an excise tax on firearm sales, purportedly because firearms are considered dangerous. However, if the rationale is to tax items perceived as dangerous or potentially harmful, then why not tax other products or activities that present risks? For instance:

Pet Stores and Dog Food Sellers:

Pet store dogs, particularly certain breeds, are statistically significantly involved in injuries and fatalities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 4.5 million people are bitten by dogs each year in the United States. Dog bites send thousands of people to emergency rooms annually and result in significant medical costs.[1] Treatment costs are considerable: up to \$18,200 for a hospital stay.[2] Despite these risks, there is no proposal to impose an excise tax on the sale of pet store dogs or dog food to fund public safety initiatives. Shouldn't pet stores and dog food manufacturers also face an excise tax to fund trauma care or public safety programs?

The logic, or lack thereof, behind HB387 sets a troubling precedent: targeting a single industry for additional taxation based on perceived risks, rather than addressing broader societal issues in a consistent and equitable way. Plainly put, this is an unfair burden on the perceived political enemies of the ruling party. HB387 disproportionately impacts law-abiding citizens who exercise their constitutional right to bear arms. Does the State only consider sports shooting to be the only legitimate use of firearms? What about the abused spouse who purchases a firearm for self-defense against a stalker? What about the hunter trying to reduce their over inflated grocery bills? Are these not legitimate firearm uses to be protected from punitive taxation?

I respectfully urge the Committee to reject HB387 and instead pursue solutions that address the true causes of violence without undermining human rights or unfairly targeting a single industry.



Thomas J. Kasuba (registered Democrat)
2917 Rosemar Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043-3332
tomkasubamd@netscape.net
301-688-8543 (day)
January 20, 2025

[1] <https://www.dogsbite.org/dog-bite-statistics-quick-statistics.php>

[2] <https://dcmldaw.com/maryland-dog-bite-lawyers>