



# Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

## Testimony in Support of SB 20- Family and Law Enforcement Protection Act

To: Senator Will Smith, Jr., Chair and  
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee  
From: Deborah Lattimer, MSSW, MPH, Lead Advocate, Gun Violence Prevention  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.  
Date: January 20, 2025

Unitarian Universalists recognize the need for safety from gun violence in domestic violence situations. We have a moral obligation and responsibility to lower the risk of gun violence to family members—and the risk can be greatest shortly after a protective order is issued. In Maryland, a gun is used in 74% of domestic violence deaths. That is why we support **SB 20 - Family and Law Enforcement Protection Act**.

In order to protect the family members who are leaving:

- There must be standard procedures for the respondent to surrender firearms to law enforcement officials.
- The respondent must surrender firearms at the onset of the initial protective order.
- The respondent must refrain from possession of ANY firearm for the duration of the interim protective order.

**SB 20** provides reasonable and standard measures to ensure that the respondent fully complies with the protective orders to surrender any and all firearms. The standards also authorize law enforcement authorities to search for firearms with probable cause and without the respondent's presence.

We urge you to vote for **SB 20**. We ask you to stand on the side of love and justice. We believe that these provisions will strengthen public safety in Maryland.

We urge a favorable report.

Thank you,

*Deborah Lattimer*

*Gun Violence Prevention Lead Advocate*