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MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
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HB 0605

February 25, 2026

TO: Members of the House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations
RE: House Bill 605: Public Safety – Gun Violence Victim Relocation Program – Establishment

POSITION: Support with Amendment

Chair Barlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports with amendment** House Bill (HB) 605.

There is an urgent need for relocation of victims in the immediate aftermath of gun violence; survivors may otherwise be dead or revictimized by the time an arrest is made. Safely relocating gun violence victims – direct victims as well as their family members and other intended targets – can help build trust between those victims, government agencies, and law enforcement which can then be leveraged to solve crimes and build stronger cases in the justice system.

The Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE) and the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) both work to ensure that timely, appropriate relocation support is available for victims of violence in Baltimore City. Now more than ever in times of fiscal uncertainty, additional partners, and infrastructure are welcome additions to our existing victim services apparatus. HB 605 would ensure complimentary state-level resources for these local-level supports and a basic safety net for jurisdictions without – or with minimal – local-level programming

HB 605 would establish a non-lapsing \$10 million fund for relocating victims of gun violence, and a Gun Violence Victim Relocation Program within the Victim Services Unit of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) to administer relocation services. This sustainable source of assistance to gun violence victims across the state is crucial to prevent further gun violence and ensure the safety and well-being of victims and victims' families. It is expected that approximately 800 direct gun violence victims will be eligible statewide each year for relocation assistance, with a large proportion coming from Baltimore City.

To most effectively achieve the intent of the bill, the BCA recommends an amendment to ensure that GOCPP works with local jurisdictions to prevent the duplication of relocation services.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable with amendment** report on HB 605.