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Bill Number: HB 605

Position: Favorable

The Maryland State's Attorneys' Association (MSAA) supports House Bill 605 and urges this Committee to issue a favorable report.

Prosecutors in Maryland bear witness on an almost daily basis to the profound impact that gun violence has on victims, their families, and the broader community. Far too often, victims of gun violence find themselves in danger long after the crime has occurred.

HB 605 takes important steps to improve the safety of victims and their families by establishing a fund to help them relocate to a safe location in the aftermath of a violent crime involving a gun. By offering protection to victims of gun violence, this program has the potential to contribute to broader public safety goals. The ongoing threat of violence in the wake of a gun crime can prevent victims from feeling comfortable participating in the criminal justice process, complicating efforts to hold dangerous offenders accountable. Relocating victims of gun violence to a location where they are safe from threats and retaliation empowers them to take an active role, one guaranteed by the Maryland Constitution, in the case.

Ultimately, HB 605 creates safer communities by protecting crime victims, and MSAA urges a favorable report from this Committee.