



TESTIMONY
HB0863 – Gun Theft Felony Act of 2026

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Schmidt
Committee: House Judiciary
Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition
Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, CoChair
Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in support of **HB0863** on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district across the state—representing and supporting more than 30,000 Marylanders.

I can't believe current law, firearm theft is typically prosecuted under the general theft statute. These penalties for firearm theft do not reflect the seriousness of the offense or the risks it creates for Marylanders. HB0863 corrects that gap by establishing clear, appropriate penalties: up to 5 years of imprisonment or a \$1,000 fine for a first conviction, and up to 10 years or a \$2,500 fine for subsequent convictions.

Firearm theft is not a victimless crime. Stolen guns frequently enter illegal markets, where they are used in violent offenses and are nearly impossible to trace. By treating gun theft as the serious crime it is, HB0863 strengthens deterrence, improves accountability, and helps prevent firearms from flowing into dangerous hands. This is a commonsense measure that supports law enforcement, protects communities, and aligns Maryland with best practices adopted in other states.

HB0863 also aligns with the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. Our work centers on transparency, accountability, and protecting Marylanders from preventable harm. Therefore, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on HB0863.