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WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February 11, 2026

To: Delegate J. Sandy Barlett, Chair

Delegate Debra Davis, Vice Chair

Judiciary Committee

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express our support for **HB 83 – Family and Law Enforcement Protection Act**.

HB 83 strengthens firearm surrender requirements for respondents subject to domestic violence protective orders. The bill requires a respondent to surrender any firearms in their possession to law enforcement, relinquish their handgun qualification license, and be prohibited from purchasing or possessing firearms for the duration of the protective order.

The legislation also enhances the information included in protective order proceedings. If the petitioner is aware that the respondent possesses a valid handgun license or firearms, the petitioner must provide relevant identifying information, including the location of the firearm, the last known sighting, and the make, model, and quantity of firearms in the respondent's possession. This ensures courts and law enforcement have the necessary details to enforce compliance effectively.

HB 83 further amends Title 4 of the Family Law Article to require that, upon issuance of a protective order, the respondent must surrender firearms and lose their handgun qualification license within 24 hours of service. Law enforcement must verify compliance within three days. If the respondent fails to comply, law enforcement must notify the State's Attorney's Office, seek an immediate search warrant, and confiscate any firearms. The bill also requires written proof of surrender, including identifying details of the firearm and the individual surrendering it.

This legislation directly aligns with the Maryland Women's Caucus's mission to protect women and families across the state. Women experience disproportionately high rates of intimate partner violence. Protective orders are intended to provide immediate and meaningful safety to victims. Allowing an abuser continued access to firearms while a protective order is in effect undermines that protection and creates a serious and preventable safety risk.

HB 83 closes critical enforcement gaps and strengthens protections for survivors of domestic violence. By ensuring timely surrender and meaningful accountability, this legislation enhances victim safety and upholds the integrity of protective orders.

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 83.