

**ALLEGANY-GARRETT
SPORTSMEN'S ASSN.**



"I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully defend from waste, the natural resources of my country, its air, soil and minerals, its forests, waters and wildlife"

P.O. Box 625 * Midlothian, Maryland 21543

Re: Opposition to House Bill 0197 – "Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act"

Honorable and distinguished members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 0197, the *"Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act,"* which proposes an additional 11% excise tax on the retail sale of firearms, ammunition, optics, magazines, and related components within the State of Maryland.

While I fully support promoting public safety and community well-being, this proposal unfairly targets lawful firearm owners, sportsmen, and small business owners who already contribute significantly through existing taxes and regulations.

It is important to note that there is already an 11% federal excise tax imposed under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, commonly known as the Pittman–Robertson Act. Revenues from this tax are directed toward critical wildlife conservation, hunter education, and range development efforts—programs that have benefitted our state and nation for decades.

In addition, all firearm and ammunition sales in Maryland are already subject to the 6% state sales tax, further increasing the financial burden on lawful consumers. Adding yet another 11% state-level excise tax would establish a cumulative tax rate approaching 28%, disproportionately affecting law-abiding citizens while having minimal effect on criminal misuse of firearms.

Such a measure risks not only penalizing responsible gun owners but also undermining small retailers and outdoor recreation industries that are vital parts of Maryland's economy. Furthermore, layering redundant taxes on an existing, effective federal program is both inefficient and contrary to the spirit of fair taxation.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose House Bill 0197 and instead explore more equitable and effective approaches to improving community safety without placing undue hardship on Maryland's law-abiding citizens.

Thank you for your attention and service to the people of Maryland.

Respectfully,

Joe L. Schroyer
Legislative Secretary
Allegany–Garrett Sportsmen's Association

