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**WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND**  
**THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**2/18/2026.**

**To: Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Chair**

**Delegate Jessica Feldmark, Vice Chair**

**Ways and Means Committee**

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express its support for **HB 197 – The Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**.

HB 197 establishes an excise tax on the gross receipts from the sale of firearms, firearm accessories, and ammunition within the State by federally licensed firearm dealers and designated out-of-state dealers. Revenue generated through this tax is directed to dedicated funds and programs aimed at reducing gun violence and supporting communities most impacted by firearm-related harm.

This legislation makes critical investments in gun violence prevention, intervention, and survivor support. Targeted funding for these programs will improve health and safety outcomes for victims of gun violence, particularly in communities that have historically experienced disproportionate rates of firearm-related violence and trauma. These resources help communities address both the immediate and long-term effects of gun violence, including physical injury, psychological trauma, and economic instability.

HB 197 is especially important for protecting women, who face heightened risks of firearm-related violence, often in the context of domestic abuse. The presence of a firearm significantly increases the likelihood that domestic violence will escalate to a fatal outcome. More than half of intimate partner homicides involve a firearm, and guns are frequently used by abusers as tools of coercion, intimidation, and control. This violence has profound and lasting impacts on survivors, families, and neighborhoods and disproportionately affects women of color.

The bill allocates funding to programs such as the Maryland Violence Intervention Program, the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention, the Coordinated Community Support Partnership Fund, and the Survivors of Homicide Victims Grant Program. By reinvesting revenue from firearm sales into prevention and survivor-centered services, HB 197 advances a comprehensive, community-based approach to public safety.

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus respectfully urges a **favorable report** on HB 197.