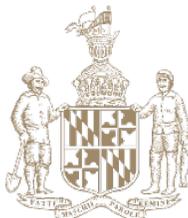


VANESSA E. ATTERBEARY
Legislative District 13
Howard County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee

Subcommittees
Chair, Family Law



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 101
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3471 · 301-858-3471
800-492-7122 Ext. 3471
Fax 410-841-3438 · 301-858-3438
Vanessa.Atterbeary@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 15, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 4

PUBLIC SAFETY - RIFLES AND SHOTGUNS – SECONDARY TRANSACTIONS

Chairman Clippinger and Members of the Committee:

Background checks are the most effective way to keep firearms out of the hands of prohibited purchasers. Currently, Maryland requires background checks for all handgun sales but not for the sale of rifles and shotguns by unlicensed sellers. As a result, felons, domestic abusers, or other prohibited individuals can purchase a rifle or shotgun at a gun show, online, or out of the trunk of their vehicle.

HB 4 would update existing Maryland law to close Maryland’s long gun loophole by requiring a background check at the time of purchase for all sales of rifles and shotguns. The current legal framework that governs all sales of “regulated firearms” would be extended to include all rifles and shotguns. All subsequent rifle and shotgun sales would thus require a valid background check at the point sale.

HB 4 would maintain current law and exempt several types of transfers of rifles and shotguns from the background check requirements, including (see HB 4 for a complete listing of exemptions):

- Transfers between immediate family members;
- Transfers necessary to prevent imminent injury or death;
- Several types of temporary transfers, including those at shooting ranges, while hunting, and at shooting competitions; and,
- Any transfers of antique firearms and curios and relics.

On May 18, 2018, it wasn’t a semi-automatic rifle that was used to murder 10 students and teachers and injure 10 others at Santa Fe High School in Texas, it was a shotgun. On June 28, 2018, a shotgun was used to shoot into the nearby offices of the Capital Gazette killing 5 employees and injuring 2 employees.

I thank the committee for its time and consideration of this matter and respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 4 – lets close Maryland's gun loophole!