

**Stoney Creek Fishing & Hunting Club**  
**9090 Ft. Smallwood Rd.**  
**Pasadena, MD 21122**

January 15, 2020

**HB 4: Public Safety – Rifles and Shotguns – Secondary Transactions**  
**Testimony by Stoney Creek Fishing and Hunting Club**  
**Oppose**

The Stoney Creek Fishing and Hunting Club, with some 300 members, **OPPOSES** HB 4. We oppose the Bill because it would: place oppressive and burdensome restrictions on law abiding citizens of Maryland; it would do nothing to prevent those who would use firearms for unlawful purposes; and finally, and perhaps most importantly, it would be unenforceable.

HB 4 has a number of provisions wherein a firearm may be loaned (transferred) on a “temporary” basis to another person under certain circumstances. These include “at an established sport shooting range or club”, “during a lawfully organized competition” and “while the transferee is hunting”, etc. The first concern is that “temporary” is not defined. Does this mean the transfer may only occur while at a shooting facility while the event is ongoing, or can the transferee use the firearm to practice at another time, at another facility or what? If it means only at the shooting facility during an organized event, this is extremely restrictive. It would prevent organizations, such as shooting clubs, academic institutions and others from loaning a firearm to a member to practice at another time or facility, or even to take a firearm home to clean it. These are burdensome and unnecessary restrictions, and in some cases it will mean the end of legitimate shooting competition.

The requirements of HB 4 that all loans, transfers, etc. (with the few exceptions outlined under Section 5-204) will do absolutely nothing to reduce the criminal use of firearms within Maryland, and in particular, the City of Baltimore. Most firearms used to commit crimes are either stolen or obtained from illegal sources. Individuals who have obtained such firearms are not about to expose themselves to arrest by trying to transfer their firearms through Federal Firearms License (FFL) dealers.

HB 4 requires that all transfers of firearms (other than the exceptions of Section 5-204.1.) be accomplished through FLL dealers. This is essentially the concept of “universal background checks”. However, when one looks at universal background checks, there is no way to enforce them. It is estimated there are upwards (subject to anyone’s guess) of 300 million firearms in the United States. While there is a much smaller number in

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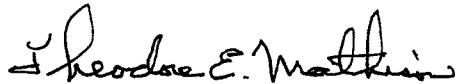
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Maryland, the point is no one knows how many there are and who owns them. There is no centralized data bank to identify who owns what firearm. Even a firearm (rifle or shotgun) purchased from a FFL dealer, say in the last 4-5 years, may be difficult or impossible to trace. It could have been sold or traded via private sale several times during that period, and there is no assurance anyone in the chain of custody has any sales receipts. Without a record of any intermediate sales, how does a law enforcement agency determine whether or not a particular firearm, currently in the possession of an individual, was obtained by that individual through a dealer or a private sale?

There is also the question of enforcing "temporary" loans at shooting facilities or when an individual is hunting. Having law enforcement personnel visit shooting facilities to check on firearm loans would be viewed by many as harassment and unworkable. Further, it would place an unnecessary burden on law enforcement agencies, and what would it accomplish in terms of reducing the criminal use of firearms?

In summary, HB 4 is a flawed bill that, if enacted, will harasses law abiding citizens, will do nothing to reduce homicides and other crimes in Maryland, and will be unenforceable.

We strongly recommend HB 4 receive an unfavorable report.



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Ch, Legislative Committee

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