



**Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team**

**Committee:** Judiciary

**Testimony on:** HB0638 - Public Safety - Untraceable and Undetectable Firearms Act

**Position:** Favorable

**Hearing Date:** March 1, 2021

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Lesley Lopez

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grassroots organization with more than 2500 members who live in a wide range of communities in Montgomery and Frederick Counties, from Bethesda near the DC line north to Frederick and from Poolesville east to Silver Spring and Olney. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep its members healthy in a safe environment. DTMG strongly supports HB0638 because it will require manufacturers to serialize any un-finished receivers and require a handgun qualifying license for the sale of an unfinished receiver, making sure that all guns in Maryland are traceable by their serial numbers,

Ghost guns -- guns made from parts available without a background check -- are the fastest growing gun safety problem facing our country today. There is no serial number, so the guns cannot be traced, thwarting the ability of law enforcement to close cases, arrest criminals, and bring justice to survivors of gun violence. The need for clear, comprehensive, and effective regulation for ghost guns has never been greater.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought an unprecedented spike in gun sales. Panic buying of guns continues at gun stores, but at least these sales are subject to background checks, unlike ghost guns. Any individual with a computer can download a DIY kit and with tools found around the house can make their own pistol, Glock 19, or an assault-style rifle, such as AR-15 or AK-47, in just hours. It's easy and cheap. Montgomery County has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of ghost guns on our streets. "Our total number for 2020 was 73 recovered ghost guns within our community... We have recovered a total of 25 ghost guns in previous years," Police Chief Marcus Jones said. "So as you see, this trend is truly heading up."<sup>1</sup>

HB0638, the Public Safety - Untraceable and Undetectable Firearms Act, is common-sense legislation that will assist law enforcement and protect our citizens. The bill would make it so

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.localdvm.com/news/maryland/montgomery-county-to-introduce-bill-restricting-untraceable-ghost-guns/>

that anyone who is selling an unfinished receiver in the state has the same serialization, as if they were selling a finished receiver; and, it also requires a handgun qualifying license for anyone who is buying an unfinished receiver.

This bill is long overdue. We have to shut down unregulated sellers who sell ghost gun building kits and traffickers who sell these guns, or more of these guns will end up on our streets causing more death, trauma, and injuries.

There is an important racial equity element in this legislation that should not be ignored. Communities of color are disproportionately affected by gun violence. The more we can do to keep these elements of destruction off of our streets, the safer all communities, particularly communities of color, will be.

DoTheMostGood is eager to work with Delegate Lopez to ensure passage of this important legislation that can help restore safety and peace of mind to Montgomery County and across the state of Maryland. Therefore, we **urge a favorable report on HB0638.**

Respectfully submitted,

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