

Testimony:

Good morning. Chairman Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher and members of the committee, my name is Jennifer Bort Yacovissi.

I live in Crownsville in District 33, Senator Gile's District. I am a volunteer with the Anne Arundel Local Group of the Maryland Chapter of Moms Demand Action.

I am here in support of SB 488 and I ask for a favorable report.

I'm also a gun violence survivor.

Everyone here in Annapolis knows of the Capitol Gazette massacre in June 2018. Well, I grew up with John McNamara; I have no memory of a time when I didn't know him. We spent every day of every summer of our childhood together. I went to his wedding; he went to mine. I last saw John five days before he and four of his coworkers were murdered by an angry man with a vendetta and easy access to guns.

The gun manufacturers want it that way. Their objective is to sell as many guns as possible, and, because of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, they do so with impunity, without needing to concern themselves with whose hands the guns go into. And we know the result: gun violence gets worse, gun companies get richer, and the rest of us are left to pick up the pieces.

Since PLCAA passed in 2005, not a single gun manufacturer accused of negligence has gone to trial. The gun industry's broad immunity from legal accountability must be repealed. Some members of this general assembly have told the media that attempting to hold gun manufacturers to account is ridiculous. It's not ridiculous; no other industry in the US enjoys this level of immunity.

Remember that we were never able to hold the tobacco industry accountable, until we were. We were never able to hold the opioid manufacturers accountable, until we were. It is long past the time for us to hold the gun industry accountable too.

Thank you for your time.