



Maryland  
Hospital Association

February 19, 2024

To: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair, House Judiciary Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill 794-Regulated Firearms – Maryland Voluntary Do Not Sell Firearm Process

Dear Chair Clippinger:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 794.

Suicides account for 54% of all firearm deaths, and 53% of all suicides involve a firearm, according to the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#). In Maryland, 2,837 lives were lost between 2010 and 2020 to self-inflicted harm with the use of a firearm—about 4.3 deaths per 100,000 Marylanders—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found.

Voluntary do not sell firearm registries are an innovative tool to prevent suicide by firearm. Laws, like the one proposed by HB 794, have passed in Washington state, Virginia, and Utah and grant people the option to add their names voluntarily and confidentially to a state system to prevent them from impulsively purchasing a gun.

While advocacy groups can cite statistics, the best arguments come from individuals with lived experience. In an op-ed published in [The Washington Post](#) Aug. 30, 2022, Bryan Barks wrote “I have mental clarity most of the time, but I know storms will come again. I want to have the ability to preempt crises. I want to have the ability to protect myself from the version of me that is not thinking clearly.”

For these reasons, we urge a *favorable* report on HB 794.

For more information, please contact:  
Erin Dorrien, Vice President, Policy  
Edorrien@mhaonline.org