

Exhibit 26

To Defendants' Memorandum in Support of Motion for
Summary Judgment

- [2009 Press Releases](#)
- [2008 Press Releases](#)
- [2007 Press Releases](#)

Testimony on the Firearms Safety Act of 2013 (Senate)

February 6th, 2013

Annapolis, MD

Chairman Frosh, Vice-Chair Gladden, Members of the Committee:

We choose to take on gun violence because every life is precious,... because every life is needed,... because there is no tragedy worse than the death of a child

In Maryland, even as we've partnered with law enforcement to drive down homicide to three decade lows, we are still losing too many of our fellow citizens to gun violence.

In 2011, the most recent year for which we have data, 516 Marylanders – mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts – were killed by guns.^[1] We have more work to do.

There is no such thing as a spare Marylander or spare American. That's why a broad coalition of police chiefs, faith leaders, advocates for domestic violence victims, and citizens from across our State have come together in support of the legislation you consider today.

These proposals build on the important work we are doing together to protect domestic violence victims from guns,... and on the important work of our Task Force on Guns and Mental illness,... and it builds on the work of brave Maryland law enforcement who put themselves in harm's way and seized over 18-hundred illegal guns from criminals last year.

A Comprehensive Approach

This legislation takes a comprehensive approach:

It includes common sense licensing provisions to keep guns away from criminals while protecting the right to legal handgun ownership. It requires a license and a criminal background check to purchase a gun. It has a gun safety training component. And it has other measures aimed at preventing criminals from obtaining guns.

Licensing provisions work. In cities where licensing is required, there are fewer guns diverted to criminals: so-called "straw-purchases" – in which people with clean records buy guns and hand them over to criminals, who then use them to kill or commit other crimes.

What's more, other states that have similar licensing provisions and they also have substantially lower gun death rates than states that do not.

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Let me be clear: we are not trying to ban handguns. This law protects legal gun ownership. It is designed to stop criminals from buying guns.

Let me be clear about another thing: we are licensing handguns, not hunting rifles. We are committed to protecting hunter's and their traditions.

This legislation bans the sale of military-style assault weapons.

We are also proposing a limit on the size of high capacity magazines.

Today, four states ban high capacity magazines with more than ten rounds. All are among the states with the lowest rates of gun deaths.

With your vote we will take a number of actions to improve mental health treatment and timely data sharing. Never again do we want to say after the fact "*if we only knew what we knew.*" In addition to new investments and information sharing upgrades, we will create Center for Excellence on Early Intervention for Serious Mental Illness. The Center will utilize more effective early intervention strategies so we can save more lives.

We will act to upgrade security at Maryland's schools with a \$25 million investment in security upgrades at Maryland's schools. Those of us that have occasion to visit our children's schools know that there is a wide spectrum when it comes to the safeguards that are in place. Simple things like the doors being locked, and visitors being checked in could make all the difference. So, we will be creating a fund within our capital schools budget which will help us to bring schools up to higher standards.

Building on our Task Force's recommendations, we will create a "Maryland Center for School Safety," which will work with both public schools and law enforcement to provide advice for school officials on the things we can do to effectively safeguard our campuses.

Conclusion

To conclude: we've made important progress together, driving violent crime in Maryland down to three decade lows. This didn't happen by itself. It wasn't barometric pressures. These are human problems we are confronted with, and so too are their solutions.

The solutions we're proposing are not about banning all guns or casting blame on everything but guns. They are about putting the focus on saving lives,... with a comprehensive approach that puts the focus on the practical, common sense things that we can do together to save lives.

This isn't about ideology, it is about public safety. Doing common sense things that work to save lives.

[1] This includes murders, suicides, and accidents

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