2023 is shaping up to be a very important year for gun violence prevention efforts in Maryland. Gun violence is taking a heavy toll in our state. Making efforts to address the gun violence crisis much more difficult, the Supreme Court has indicated that a central safeguard of our state’s handgun permit system, the requirement that an individual must have a “good and substantial reason” to carry a handgun, is unconstitutional. In the wake of this it is critical to take a close look at how the system can be strengthened to ensure that public carry permits are not issued to those who are not suitable to carry a firearm. This will mean not only modifying the permitting requirements, but also looking at where it is appropriate to carry firearms, the safety standards we are holding gun owners and licensed gun dealers to and the redress that victims of gun violence have access to, as well as addressing root causes of gun violence.

We recommend that the Maryland General Assembly do the following:

- Consider strengthening MD’s system for purchasing a handgun by prohibiting gun ownership by individuals that have demonstrated a propensity for violence.
- Modify MD’s system to qualify for a license to carry a firearm in public to include:
  - Broadening the scope of the investigation to capture any history of a propensity for violence ... in particular domestic violence and alcohol-induced violence.
  - Considering whether the current training requirement is adequate and requires a stronger demonstration of competency.
- Identify “sensitive places” for which guns are prohibited.
- Strengthen laws related to gun safety such as Child Access Prevention and proper storage parameters of firearms in automobiles, in order to raise the standards of responsible gun ownership. Include allocation of federal money available through the Safer Communities Act to increase education and awareness around these gun safety issues.
- Address Gun Manufacturers’ Immunity by creating a state cause of action allowable under the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.
- Require local law enforcement agencies to share their crime gun trace data in a uniform way such that the Maryland State Police and the AG’s office can identify and disrupt gun trafficking patterns.
- Determine how federal money designated to ERPO implementation can be used to strengthen our current system and whether any modifications need to be made on a legislative level.
- Address the social and economic inequalities that are the root cause of gun violence in impacted communities of color such as income inequality, poverty, underfunded public housing, under-resourced public services, under-performing schools, lack of opportunity and perceptions of hopelessness, and easy access to firearms by high risk people.

The items listed in this document are not meant to include the entire scope of needed gun violence prevention efforts in the state of Maryland. Of particular note, is the need for a state level gun violence prevention office which is beyond the scope of this paper. Members of of MVPC would be happy to communicate further on these or other efforts. Please reach out to myles@mdpgv.org or kimberly@cjauctionfund.org for more information.