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Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence, Community Justice, and the Maryland Violence Prevention Coalition Stand United with Governor Moore in Unveiling Legislative Priority for Statewide Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention

Annapolis, January 9, 2024 — Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence (“MPGV”), Community Justice and the Maryland Violence Prevention Coalition (“MVPC”) express their utmost support as Governor Moore announces a groundbreaking legislative initiative, making the creation of a state-level Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention a top priority. This strategic move represents a fundamental shift in our approach toward tackling the root causes of gun violence.

"The establishment of the Center for Firearm Prevention and Intervention marks a profound investment in the lives of Marylanders, especially those most affected by the trauma of gun violence," said Tarria Stanley, Regional Advocacy Manager for Community Justice. *"For too long, our strategies in combating gun violence have only been reactive, addressing the aftermath rather than preempting the root causes of violence. Governor Moore's announcement marks a pivotal shift towards a comprehensive, public health-centered strategy to tackle this crisis throughout the state."*

The proposed Center, to be housed within the Maryland Department of Health, is positioned to foster engagement with a diverse array of stakeholders. This includes active partnerships with the public health community, law enforcement agencies, community-based groups, county, and local agencies, as well as non-governmental gun violence prevention organizations. By unifying these efforts, the Center aims to comprehensively address gun violence in its various forms across the state.

Karen Herren, Executive Director of MPGV and Co-Lead of the MVPC, emphasizes the significance of this legislative initiative:

"The establishment of a state-level office is a proactive measure, enabling more rapid and effective coordination of resources. It will also play a crucial role in identifying communities that require focused, strategic services to prevent, rather than merely address, gun violence."

MPGV, Community Justice, and the MVPC collaborated to lead advocacy efforts to establish the Center. We commend Governor Moore's leadership in championing this critical initiative and look forward to collaborating towards a safer and more resilient Maryland.

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