



Testimony in SUPPORT of:
Bill #36-23 – Sale of Firearms or Ammunition – Suicide Awareness and
Firearm Education (SAFE) Act
October 10, 2023

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, and pluralism. To that end, we have a history of advocating for our nonprofit partners which serve, on a nonsectarian basis, the most vulnerable populations among us.

The JCRC supports Bill 36-23, the Suicide Awareness and Firearm Education (SAFE) Act, which would require firearms retailers to provide suicide prevention literature at point of sales. Specifically, the SAFE Act would require the Department of Health and Human Services to develop literature about firearm safety, suicide prevention and conflict resolution. If retailers do not comply with the distribution regulation, they may be issued a civil citation.

For decades, the JCRC has advocated for common-sense gun safety measures because we know that access to deadly weapons contributes to the rise in senseless violence and death we continue to witness. In Maryland, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 42% of all suicides are committed with a firearm and suicides make up 36% of all firearm deaths in the state. We are experiencing a mental health crisis in this country and every measure we can take for gun violence prevention must be implemented. For these reasons, the JCRC strongly supports Bill 36-23.