

Advocacy

Maryland Jewish
DAY RECEPTION 2024



Protecting Victims of Domestic Abuse

In 2022, a requirement was placed on the FBI to notify local law enforcement when a prohibited person attempts to legally purchase a firearm and fails the background check. Maryland conducts some of its own background checks, and the federal requirement does not apply to Maryland State Police. Though this system of notification is helpful for law enforcement to be “in the loop,” it does nothing to help victims of domestic abuse to be aware of the potential intentions of their abuser.

SB753/HB869 – Public Safety - Firearm Background Checks, Victim Notification, and the Maryland State Police Gun Center (Sen. Shelly Hettleman/Del. Sandy Bartlett)

This bill would require anyone in Maryland (likely State Police and/or regulated firearm dealers who conduct background checks) to notify the State Police Gun Center of a background check denial. The State Police Gun Center will then notify the local law enforcement agency within 24 hours, and that agency would then be responsible for notifying any victim of domestic violence of the background check denial if it is based on a prohibited person pursuant to an order of protection or violation of a protective order. In this way, victims can be informed of their abuser’s potential intentions and take necessary precautions.

Why is this important for the Jewish Community?

People in situations of abuse come to Jewish Agencies such as CHANA and JCADA because they want to know their options and rights. What underlies all domestic violence is power and control. Our agencies’ clients experience physical, sexual, psychological, financial, technological, and spiritual abuse. By allowing them the ability to take back some control, we are empowering these victims.