

MICHIGAN DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION & TREATMENT BOARD

Board Members

- ◆ Hon. Elizabeth Pollard Hines (Ret.) -Chair
 - ◆ Dr. NiCole Buchanan ◆ Kristen Howard ◆ Hon. Melissa Pope
 - ◆ Rebecca Shiemke ◆ Matt Wiese ◆ Sgt. Kyla Williams
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Chairperson Hope, House Criminal Justice Committee
Anderson House Office Building
N-1093
Lansing, MI 48933

September 26, 2023

RE: MDSVPTB Support HB 4945-4946

Dear Chairperson Hope and Criminal Justice Committee Members,

The Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board¹ (the Board) reviewed and discussed HB 4945-4946 (SB 471-472) at its August meeting. The Board supports these bills and is very grateful to Representative O’Neal and Senator Chang for introducing such important legislation. The Board appreciates being given the opportunity to work with the bill sponsors and stakeholders on these bills.

The connection between firearms and domestic violence fatalities is undisputed. Nationally, 93% of women who are murdered are killed by a man they know, and 64% of these women were intimate partners of their killers². Firearm use accounts for over half of the murders of women by men they knew³. And the presence of a firearm in a home makes domestic violence five times more likely to be lethal⁴.

These bills will enhance the safety of domestic violence survivors by making it harder for convicted DV offenders to have access to firearms or ammunition that could be used to kill, harm, and threaten them.

¹ The Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board (the Board) is a seven-member Governor-appointed Board with legislative responsibilities including funding sexual assault and domestic violence services for victims and providing policy recommendations on the issues of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence. *Please note that the Board’s position and rationale are solely that of the Board and do not necessarily represent the view of any individual member of the Board, nor the views of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services or any other body.* Although the Board is administratively housed within MDHHS in the Division of Victim Services, it is an independent, legislatively-created body.

² When Men Murder Women, Violence Policy Center, 2017

³ Id

⁴ Campbell, et al Risk Factors for Femicide.

The Board is thankful for this legislative step in securing protections for victims and survivors. To implement the full intent of these and other protective measures, the Board continues to advocate for a statewide statutory firearm retrieval, relinquishment, and storage process where firearm access has been restricted through conviction or court order, including personal protection orders,

Thank you for your time and commitment to protections for crime victims. Please contact Angie Povilaitis, Staff Attorney for the Board at povilaitisa1@michigan.gov, or Jess Averill, Board Policy Analyst at Averillj@michigan.gov, if you have any questions or would like to further discuss these Board positions.