

Daniel J. Carlin-Weber  
HB963 – FAV  
Ways and Means Committee  
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I am a firearms instructor and advocate of responsible firearms handling and ownership. Currently, I am certified by the Maryland State Police as a Qualified Handgun Instructor and regularly teach the course necessary to receive the Handgun Qualification License (HQL). I'm also a Utah Concealed Firearm Permit Instructor, and NRA Range Safety Officer and Basic Pistol Instructor. Since 2016, I have instructed Marylanders from all walks of life on how to safely operate firearms and the responsibilities that come with their usage. I come before you today to ask a favorable report of House Bill 963.

House Bill 963 would exempt the first \$500 from sales tax for firearms storage products. With the introduction of this year's Jaelynn's Law, bills SB479 and HB200, and Maryland's already strict storage requirements under MD Criminal Law § 4-104, this sort of tax incentive should be welcomed. Passage would show a commitment to common sense gun safety by encouraging current and new gun owners to seek gun safes or upgrade from whatever methods of storage they have now. 2020 saw record-breaking gun sales with an estimated 40% of buyers being first-time gun owners. *DC area joins nationwide trend of first-time gun ownership*, WTOP, September 22, 2020, <https://wtop.com/local/2020/09/dc-area-joins-nationwide-trend-of-first-time-gun-ownership/>. 2021 is showing a similar trend. *Gun Sales Rise During Civil Unrest, Pandemic*, News4 Washington, January 15, 2021, <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/gun-sales-rise-during-civil-unrest-pandemic/ar-BB1cLQNb>. HB963 helps these new gun owners responsibly and safely store their firearms so they do not end up in the wrong hands.

Gun ownership is oftentimes a costly affair. Maryland requires that potential handgun buyers first acquire the HQL, which on average costs in upwards of \$200. Between the licensing requirements, the gun itself, and ammunition, the typical Marylander is spending in the neighborhood of \$1000 in exercise of an individual right (see *District of Columbia v Heller*, 554 U.S., 570 (2008)) BEFORE purchasing the means to secure the firearm. While MD Public Safety § 5-132(c) requires that a handgun cannot be sold without a Maryland Handgun Roster Board-approved locking device (see *Approved Integrated Mechanical Safety Devices*, Maryland State Police, <https://mdsp.maryland.gov/Document%20Downloads/Approved%20Integrated%20Mechanical%20Safety%20Devices.pdf>), these locks provide a false sense of security (see *Franzen Security's Borelock Picked Fast*, LockPickingLawyer, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pK8\\_DpY5GOw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pK8_DpY5GOw)), do not prevent the firearm from being taken or transported, and generally shouldn't be relied upon.

I do recommend to all of my students that they purchase whatever safes or lockers their budgets permit and to create a routine for storing their firearms. Providing a tax incentive to do so will only cause more gun owners to seek better methods of securing their firearms.

I urge a favorable report.



Daniel J. Carlin-Weber  
300 St Paul Pl., 711  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
Djc\_w@icloud.com