

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2015 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 17

(Senator Conway)

Judicial Proceedings

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**Baltimore City School Police Force - Carrying of Firearms - Scope**

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This bill authorizes a Baltimore City school police officer to carry a firearm at any time on the premises of a Baltimore City public school and any other property used for an educational purpose that is owned, leased, operated by, or under the control of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. The bill also repeals requirements that the school police officer may only carry a firearm on the premises of the school to which the police officer is, either permanently or temporarily, assigned and only when school is *not* in session.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2015.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** None. The bill does not result in any required change in the number of Baltimore City school police officers or the number of firearms available to them.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** A Baltimore City school police officer may carry a firearm on the premises of the school property to which the officer is assigned, either temporarily or permanently, when school is not in session. Other than this provision regarding possession of a firearm, a school police officer has all the powers of a law enforcement officer while on school property.

The Firearm Safety Act of 2013 (Ch. 427) exempts an off-duty law enforcement officer who is a parent, guardian, or visitor of a student attending a school from the prohibition against carrying a firearm, knife, or other deadly weapon on public school property, provided that the officer is displaying the officer's badge or credential, and the weapon is concealed. Chapter 427 also prohibits a person, while hunting for any wild bird or mammal, from shooting or discharging any firearm within 300 yards of any school during school hours or at a time when a school-approved activity is taking place.

**Background:** On December 14, 2012, a 20-year-old gunman fatally shot 20 children and 6 adult staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. The incident was the second-deadliest school shooting in U.S. history, after the 2007 Virginia Tech massacre. In the aftermath of the shooting, school security has been widely discussed in the media and the political arena.

The Baltimore City school police force provides security services to the entire school district, or approximately 180 school locations within Baltimore City. Of the 141 officers in the force, 105 officers are assigned to individual schools and the additional 36 officers include supervisors, evening/night shift officers, and officers assigned to the district office. The force is a 24-hour full service law enforcement agency, which is certified by the Maryland Police and Training Commission (MPTC). Officers have access to firearms in accordance with training requirements of MPTC.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 101 (Delegate Anderson) - Judiciary.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 8, 2015  
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