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SB39  
OPPOSE

I write in opposition to SB39, a bill that would criminalize the ownership of the commonly owned Anderson Manufacturing rifles chambered in the 300 Blackout cartridge with no regard for current owners of such rifles or for their lawful use in hunting game, target shooting, or home defense.

This rifle is fundamentally different than the already banned copies of the Colt AR-15 that fires the .223 or 5.56mm caliber, take notice that the "300 Blackout" is referring to the common name for a 30 caliber cartridge commonly used for deer hunting. In Maryland and most other states, the already banned .223 caliber projectile is considered too small to hunt due to its projectile being too small and lightweight. 30 caliber cartridges such as 300 Blackout, 30-06, or .308 are used due to the heavier projectile that typically travels at a much slower speed than a .223 or 5.56 cartridge and instead of relying on speed, relies on the projectile's diameter to provide a humane hunting experience.

This characteristic of being a fatter, slower, projectile also makes 300 Blackout an attractive home defense choice since the risk of over penetration of walls is reduced when compared to the .223 or 5.56mm projectile an AR-15 fires. By banning these firearms, you would effectively be forcing Maryland residents to less than ideal firearms for self defense purposes in the home.

This law appears to be little more than a thinly veiled attempt to score political capital and say "we're doing something" when the Uniform Crime Report found on the Maryland State Police website (<https://mdsp.maryland.gov/Document%20Downloads/2017%20Uniform%20Crime%20Report.pdf>) lists on page 17 that in 2016 and 2017 there were a total of seven (7) murders with a rifle. By comparison, strangulation registered a total of nine (9) murders over this two year period, knives one hundred and twenty seven (127), and blunt objects twenty six (26). Given that the numbers for all rifles, regardless of type or caliber, is so low, especially when compared with other weapons, it seems a waste of resources to criminalize one commonly owned rifle that hunters use based on a hypothetical that a criminal may use one at a future date when the historical data compiled by MD State Police proves otherwise.

The next issue is what will happen to Maryland residents, including myself, who own one of these firearms if mere ownership suddenly becomes a criminal offense overnight. This bill risks creating thousands of "criminals" overnight simply for owning a rifle in a specific caliber. This will similarly leave hunters without a useful rifle to hunt game to put food on their tables. This is hardly a positive outcome.

It should also be noted that a .223 or 5.56mm cartridge simply will not fit or fire from a 300 Blackout barrel, even if such a cartridge was somehow forced into the chamber and fired, it would not fire effectively since the smaller bullet would fail to build any pressure behind it. Similarly, the cost of 300 Blackout ammunition is approximately double that of .223 or 5.56mm ammunition when comparing even some of the cheapest target ammunition across these calibers. It would hardly make sense for a criminal to chose a more expensive, less common, caliber that is wholly incompatible with a standard AR-15 chambered in the standard .223 or 5.56mm caliber. A caliber that fires slower than that of the standard AR-15 with a much shorter effective range as a result.

For these reasons, I must urge you give an unfavorable report to this bill. If it were enacted into law, the State will be prosecuting inevitable violations by otherwise law-abiding citizens of Maryland, destroying reputations and inflicting legal and economic ruin on these individuals, all for continuing to own a firearm that was legal the night before. Jobs will be lost, security clearances revoked, and families broken apart. Whatever public safety rationale is hollow, as by Maryland State Police's own numbers, long guns are used in far fewer violent crimes when compared to bare hands, blunt objects, or knives.

Sincerely yours,



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