

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



NRA

February 4, 2022

Chairman William C. Smith Jr.
90 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland, 21401

Dear Chairman Smith:

On behalf of our members in Maryland, I would like to communicate our strong support for Senate Bill 338.

At present, Maryland Handgun Wear and Carry Permit applicants are required to complete 16-hour certified firearms training course. SB 338 would alter existing law to provide an avenue for law-abiding Marylanders to obtain preliminary approval of a Handgun Wear and Carry Permit contingent upon their subsequent completion of the requisite certified firearms training course within 120 days of receiving the permit.

Under SB 338, those seeking preliminary approval of a Handgun Wear and Carry Permit would still be required to undergo a Maryland State Police investigation to determine that they do not pose a danger to themselves or others and that they have a good and substantial reason to carry a handgun. Should an individual who is granted preliminary approval of a Handgun Wear and Carry Permit fail to obtain the requisite firearms training within 120 of receiving their approval, the permit would be revoked.

This legislation would help to ensure that law-abiding Marylanders have timely access to the means of self-defense. As was seen this summer, the threat of violence can arise with little warning or opportunity for preparation. On a more personal scale, an unanticipated need to provide for one's self-defense can occur can come about at any time. For instance, a woman fleeing domestic violence could have an immediate need to carry a firearm, but may be unable to secure the requisite training for Handgun Wear and Carry Permit in a prompt manner.

Moreover, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has made it more difficult to obtain certified firearms training. As Marylanders work together to combat the virus through social distancing, opportunities to congregate have been reduced. Many Marylanders, due to personal health concerns may be reluctant to pursue firearms training in a traditional setting. SB 338 would allow prospective Handgun Wear and Carry Permit holders greater leeway to choose a safe time and setting to complete the required certified firearms training course.

For the foregoing reasons NRA supports 338.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.J. Spiker".

D.J. Spiker
Maryland State Director
NRA-ILA

CC: Senator Jeff Waldstreicher
Senator Jack Bailey
Senator Jill P. Carter
Senator Robert Cassilly
Senator Shelly Hettleman
Senator Michael J. Hough
Senator Susan C. Lee
Senator Charles E. Sydnor III
Senator Ron Watson
Senator Chris West