
WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF KATIE NOVOTNY IN OPPOSITION OF
SB784

February 23, 2024

I am a gun owner, advocate for the right to self-defense, certified range safety officer, and a competitor in firearms competition. I oppose SB784.

This bill imposes an 11% excise tax on dealers for the sale of firearms, ammunition, and firearms accessories to fund a number of Funds the state provides money for. Based on interviews with various news outlets, the bill sponsor claims these are a tax on the dealers, not the consumer, but anyone who understands basic economics understands that these costs will be passed along to the consumer. Dealers simply cannot absorb these costs even if they wanted to.

The fiscal and policy note highlights this impact with \$22.4 million expected in revenue in FY26, with an increase of about 1 million every year. This is a huge tax on those who choose to purchase firearms and related items legally within this state. All to allegedly fund programs that pay for the cost of violent crime. This specifically punishes law abiding citizens who choose to exercise their second amendment right, by forcing them to specifically pay for the actions of others, as though they are complicit because they own firearms.

This will drive dealers out of business because in many instances, people will simply purchase from out of state, and in the case of handguns, then just have them transferred to a Maryland dealer to complete the 77r. Long guns, accessories, and ammunition may be purchased either online, or in person out of state, depending on the item. Of course those who wish to purchase firearms illegally off the streets and use them for crime, will continue to do so without paying this 11% tax.

This is a misguided attempt to fund resources that are not utilized because of the lawful sale of firearms, ammunition, and accessories to law abiding citizens. The state needs to find other ways to lower the violent crime rate rather than taxing citizens punitively.

Because of these reasons above, I request an unfavorable report.

Respectfully,

Katie Novotny

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