

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2004 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 414  
Judiciary

(Delegate Smigiel, *et al.*)

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**Handgun Safety Devices - Repeal**

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This bill repeals the prohibition against a dealer selling, offering for sale, renting, or transferring a handgun in the State unless it is equipped with an external safety lock or an integrated mechanical safety device. The bill also repeals related requirements pertaining to duties of the Handgun Roster Board to review and report on the status of personalized handgun technology.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. While this bill would likely cause some reorganization of trooper and civilian staff responsibilities within the Department of State Police, it would not result in any general or special fund savings to either personnel costs or other operating expenses.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful. The provisions of this bill would likely spur additional handgun sales in the State. The actual magnitude of such a retail impact on handgun dealers is unknown, but is assumed to be potentially significant to the State's 269 licensed gun dealers, who are generally believed to be small businesses.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** An integrated mechanical safety device is a disabling or locking device that is built into a handgun and designed to prevent the handgun from being discharged unless the device has been deactivated. An external safety lock is an external device that

is attached to a handgun with a key or combination lock and is designed to prevent a handgun from being discharged unless the device has been deactivated.

A licensed firearms dealer is prohibited from selling or transferring in the State a handgun, made on or before December 31, 2002, without an external safety lock. Beginning January 1, 2003, a dealer may not sell or transfer any handgun made after December 31, 2002 unless it has an integrated mechanical safety device. (This provision does not apply to sales to the government, military, or law enforcement, or sales or transfers by licensed dealers or manufacturers to lawful out-of-state customers.)

The Handgun Roster Board is an entity within the Department of State Police. The board is required to review the status of personalized handgun technology and report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly on an annual basis, beginning by July 1, 2002.

A personalized handgun is a handgun manufactured with incorporated design technology that allows the handgun to be fired only by the authorized user and prevents any of the safety characteristics of the handgun from being readily deactivated.

These provisions were contained in Chapter 2 of 2000, the Responsible Gun Safety Act of 2000.

**Background:** As of April 2003, the following integrated mechanical safety devices have been approved by the Handgun Roster Board:

- Bersa Lock (Firestorm);
- Bond Arms Derringer Lock (not the “Allen Key” version);
- Charter 2000;
- Cimarron-Aldo Uberti System for SAA;
- Ghost, Inc. (for Glocks only);
- Glock’s Lock;
- Heckler & Koch System;
- Saf-T-Trigger by Saf-T-Hammer;
- Smith & Wesson Lock;
- Springfield Armory, Integral Locking System;
- Strahan Firing Pin Lock;
- Swiss Safety by Aldo Uberti;
- Taurus Systems, separate systems for revolvers and semi-automatics;
- Walther 22; and
- Sig Arms (only on model 229 at this time).

With respect to personalized handgun technology, the board concluded in a 2002 report that “while extensive research has been conducted in the area of personalized weapons, currently there are no models of personalized handguns available for sale. Based on its research, the technology to produce personalized weapons is between two and 10 years away. The Board will continue to evaluate the status of personalized handgun technology and report its findings each year to the Governor and the General Assembly of Maryland.”

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** In 2003, a similar bill, HB 583, had a hearing before the House Judiciary Committee and had no further action taken on it.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 11, 2004  
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