

January 15, 2020

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SCOTT G. DAVIS IN OPPOSITION TO SB39

I appreciate the opportunity to present my testimony in opposition to SB39 to the members of this committee this afternoon.

This proposed bill attempts to ban a set of weapons that are already banned in this state. The Anderson Manufacturing .223 caliber AM-15 long gun is considered a copycat of the Colt AR-15. The Anderson Manufacturing .223 caliber pistol is not on our Handgun Roster and therefore cannot be purchased. The .300 caliber Anderson Manufacturing gun is a *hunting* rifle. In addition there is no clause for grandfathering; therefore, I am left to assume that these weapons will be illegal to own after October 1, 2020 with absolutely no compensation. The State of Maryland has no legal power to do this. The Anderson Manufacturing AM-15 pistols in .300 caliber are legal to own per the handgun roster. Since this gun is being placed on a revised banned list of guns from the 2013 Firearms Safety Act, that means that this gun will have been illegal to own after October 1, 2013. This clearly violates the Maryland Takings Clause.

I am a lifetime, law abiding resident of Hagerstown Maryland with a background in Architectural Drafting and Design. I have 10 years of experience within one firm and 20 years of experience of owning my own business. I have a combined 30 years dedicated to a passion that I truly love which is not only drafting and design but also being a productive member in our society by providing the construction industry with blueprints and design for projects that range from Government, institutional, manufacturing and business facilities to residential projects.

I have always had a passion for various hobbies throughout my entire life. Since the age of 42, I have become a "gun guy" which was 8 years ago. My guns of choice are state labeled as "assault weapons" which I legally own and I use them for the recreational purpose of target shooting. As soon as I take any gun and point it at a paper or steel target at a range, I am target shooting. As soon as I take any gun and hunt game with it (so be allowable by law), I am hunting. I also have the right to use these guns for self-defense to protect myself and my family. I have good, sound reasons to own these guns despite the call from the uneducated, fearmongering media and politicians who insist on calling for the malleable catch phrase, "common sense gun control".

Over the course of time that I have owned "assault weapons", I have been berated by politicians, the news media, progressive groups, and people of ignorance that do not own guns or know very little about them. I am told constantly that they are nothing more than "weapons of war on the streets" of which I supposedly have "no reason to own." "There is no reason to own an AR-15" has been a popular catch phrase among the less knowledgeable. Please remember that millions of other "assault rifle owners" nor I have never killed anyone, I have never attempted to kill anyone and I have no intentions of killing anyone; however, we along with the weapons get the finger pointed at us for the reckless

deeds of mentally ill people and criminals at every corner. The people that commit these heinous crimes are to blame, not us law abiding citizens or the guns. I was 4 years old when my father was killed along side of the road by a drunk driver while he was trying to change a flat tire on his car. I did not once in my lifetime blame cars for taking his life. It was the guy behind the wheel that was drunk who was at fault. Punishing drunk drivers is acceptable. Unfortunately, punishing law abiding citizens after mass shootings occur is acceptable too. This needs to stop. It needs to change. Ignorant politicians and media driven scare tactics push this narrative are partly to blame for the continual violence in this state and all over the country.

As a staunch supporter of the second amendment and a gun owner that has a passion for Maryland state labeled "assault rifles", let me be perfectly clear about something. Every single time I hear of a life that has been taken by a firearm, I am deeply saddened. It is awful what families have to go through when losing a loved one to such a tragedy. Be it the "mass shootings" that the news media crave in order to gain ratings or the average person that never gets reported on by the national news, whether it is criminal related, suicide related or accidental. I find that when I talk to people that are against guns or certain types of guns in one form or another, they all tend to assume that we gun owners do not care about the people lives that are taken each and every day across the nation. This is a fallacy. I argue that we care more about these people than the fear mongering politicians and news media because we wish they had the right to stand their ground, own a firearm and defend themselves when fearing for their lives. It is states like Maryland that prevent us law abiding citizens from doing just that.

It is sad to see that some peoples only exposure to firearms are negative things such as reports on the nightly news, shootings happening in their own neighborhoods, Hollywood movies, the glorifying of villains in our culture, televisions portrayal of bad guys with guns, etc. It is sad to see that most of these people will never know what it is like to go to a gun range or a friends back yard and have fun shooting at targets, going hunting, competing, collecting firearms or investing in firearms. There is a large positive gun culture out there that far outweighs the evil deeds of the very few; however, these positive aspects of firearm ownership do not make good enough ratings for the nightly or national news therefore the public in general get absolutely no positive exposure to my hobby. A good guy with a gun does not make good news in the eyes of the Democratic leftist.

I ask this question to myself about the MGA quite frequently. When will our elected politicians in Maryland, wake up to the fact that you cannot take the word "assault", put it in front of the word "weapon", scare the ignorant, uninformed, uneducated people regarding firearms, pass laws banning more weapons and goad people into believing this is going to solve our homicide rate in Baltimore? This model has failed across the country time and time again. This Baltimore homicide number has spiked dramatically since the Firearms Safety Act of 2013 went into place. This act turned all of our legally owned "regulated weapons" into banned "assault weapons" and even included evil features deemed scary by people that do not know one end of a gun from the other. This is proof positive that banning "assault weapons" or any other weapons simply does not work. In a Baltimore Sun Article from January of 2019 the article stated that the overwhelmingly type of guns used in crimes of violence within the City of Baltimore in 2018 were stolen handguns per the data collected by the Baltimore Police Department. Let me emphasize the word STOLEN. If the gun laws that are already in place were enforced to the

fullest extent, we would not be reading about the criminals with long wrap sheets containing multiple violent offenses that get slapped on the wrist only to turn around and commit more violent crimes. Until we begin to discuss and address the real problem of “people control”, instead of “gun control”, this violence is not going to go away. We need to have a hard, honest talk and solutions for things such as:

1. The lack of opportunities for the underprivileged, especially our youth.
2. The mentally ill and the pharmaceutical stranglehold on such people.
3. The enforcement and the upholding of the laws that are already on the books for crimes of violence.
4. The allowing of all law abiding gun owners to carry concealed weapons in Maryland for self-defense.
5. Wide area surveillance, which I am happy to see is slated to be implemented in Baltimore in March of 2020. This technology needs to have major oversight by third parties, not politicians or police.

In conclusion, it is clear that the MGA operates under a combination of mindsets:

1. A portion of the MGA as well as the Attorney General, Brian Frosh, are truly ignorant of the facts that I, along with many other law abiding gun owners and FBI statistics, present to you.
2. A portion of the MGA as well as the Attorney General, Brian Frosh, are well aware that the laws that are passed are not going to work therefore allowing you to go into future sessions to ban more guns and tighten the screws until there is nothing left to ban. This still leaves the problem of violent criminals killing people unsolved.
3. A portion of the MGA as well as the Attorney General, Brian Frosh, places their personal interests above the interests and safety of their constituency.

As long as the MGA insists on the call for the ever malleable term, “common sense gun control”, which is extremely broad and has a definition that fluctuates depending on the individual that you are talking to, I cannot trust this group of people to come up with the solutions necessary to curb the violence that we have in our state. It does not matter what type guns you ban or how many guns you ban. We do not have a gun problem, we have a people problem.

Sincerely,

Scott G. Davis