
Written Testimony of Katie Novotny in Support of SB 156

January 29, 2020

I am a member of Multiple Gun Rights organizations. Maryland Shall Issue, Associated Gun Clubs, Maryland State Rifle and Pistol Association, and the National Rifle Association. I am a certified Range Safety Officer with the NRA. I compete in multiple shooting events such as Steel Challenge, 3-gun, small bore, and vintage military rifle matches. I am an avid firearms collector. I support SB 156.

The Firearm Safety Act of 2013 (FSA2013) already carves out provisions for certain law enforcement officers (LEO) to be exempt from the training required to receive a Handgun Qualification License (HQL). This bill adds a number of states to the list of whose residents who are LEO's, would be exempt from the training. I believe that this should go further and exempt any LEO, from any state. I can say with certainty that all of these individuals have received training that exceeds the minimums set forth by this state for the HQL. Furthermore, this exemption should be applied to retired LEO as well.

During testimony in the House on HB 47, the question was raised about the type of training required by neighboring states, and the hiring practices of those states. My research has shown that states and municipalities are not hiring criminals, as was asserted in testimony. Furthermore, if a police officer was a prohibited person, this bill is only exempting them from the training. They would still be required to pass a background check to receive their HQL, and then to pass another background check and a 7 day wait at the time of purchase. In regards to training, I have linked many of the neighboring states requirements for police officers in their states. All have firearm qualification requirements that far surpass the 4 hours required by the HQL. All states except Hawaii also require varying hours of refresher training, to include firearms, every year, to every three years.

This website has a list of annual training required by state, as well as a link to each accountable body.
<https://www.apexofficer.com/police-training-requirements>

This is the Pennsylvania code:

<https://mpoetc.psp.pa.gov/certification/Documents/Certification%20Documents/Information%20for%20Police%20Departments/Title%2037%20Section%20203%20Subchapter%20B%20-%20Police%20Officer%20Certifications.pdf>

Delaware: <http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title1/800/801.shtml>

New Jersey: https://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcj/njptc/pdf/2013-0920_PTC-Rules.pdf

Virginia: <https://www.dcs.virginia.gov/law-enforcement/certification-process-and-mandated-service-requirements-le-officer>

<https://www.dcs.virginia.gov/law-enforcement/manual/standards-performance-outcomes/law-enforcement-officers/weapons>

West Virginia: <https://djcs.wv.gov/law-enforcement-professional-standards/Documents/149-2%20Final%20File%20Version%20%2022%20Jun%2016.pdf>

These are only the direct links to the immediate surrounding states. They all have a couple of things in common, for all officers hired in the state at any level. Candidates must pass background checks, psychiatric and psychological tests, and drug tests, along with a number of other requirements, mostly physical in nature. All of these states require training to be performed at academies that meet the states requirements. There are no small town LEO's that have not had proper training.

In addition to all of this evidence that points to the over qualifications of these individuals, the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA) already allows these individuals to carry a concealed firearm anywhere in the country. It seems silly to require them to then sit through 4 hours of extremely basic training.

I request a favorable report.

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