

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

2 East Miller Senate Office

Annapolis, MD 21401

Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shmuel Frankel. I am the president of the Givati Rifle and Pistol Club, a Jewish gun club located in Pikesville (givatirpc.org). You may recall that I testified before your committee last year. Unfortunately, it does not look like I can make it this year.

I wanted to reach out to you about this bill because I think that I can offer unique insight into this issue, as an orthodox Jew and CCW instructor.

Jewish communities in America are under attack. Many of us don't feel safe in our own places of worship or grocery stores. Those of us who choose to publicly identify as religious Jews, with religious garb, are afraid to walk in the street. Our community in Baltimore is also located near some of the most dangerous areas in the entire country. Many members of the Jewish community are turning to firearms for protection.

As an instructor, I have personally put close to 40 people through my HQL and CCW classes since the attack on a synagogue in December. Other instructors in the Jewish community have also told me that they are running packed classes on almost a weekly basis. I also offer free consultations on almost a daily basis with community members who want more information about getting a CCW.

Some people who are business owners have obtained carry permits. Now that these permits are unrestricted, most have pledged to carry to synagogue to help protect our community. We have even started a low cost training group to provide additional instruction related to carrying in synagogue.

However, the vast majority of Jewish gun owners are not so lucky. Although they are willing to help keep our community safe, they are unable to obtain a carry permit.

Changing Maryland's carry permit laws to Shall Issue will make the Jewish community safer. Our community is being targeted, with no end in sight. We want to be able to carry firearms to protect ourselves, our families, and our communities.

Thank you for your hard work this legislative session,

Shmuel Frankel Esq.

President - Givati Rifle and Pistol Club