

SB 664 Declaration of Rights - Right to Privacy

**Opposed**

Honorable Chairmen Smith, Senator Lee and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, I am Pastor David Whitney Senior Instructor at Institute on the Constitution where I teach the only course offered anywhere on the Maryland State Constitution. I had the privilege of developing this course with the help of scholars and attorneys and I have taught this to many citizens in our Old Line State for the past ten years. The Student Manual which contains a detailed outline of each of the lectures I deliver along with reading assignment for the student tops out at 283 pages.

I oppose this bill on Constitutional grounds. Our Maryland Constitution in the Declaration of Rights states that governments are instituted among men to secure God given rights. In essence that Declaration of Rights is the job description for the civil government.

Our Maryland State Constitution begins,

*We, the People of the State of Maryland, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberty, and taking into our serious consideration the best means of establishing a good Constitution in this State for the sure foundation and more permanent security thereof, declare:*

The Declaration of Rights is foundational to our Maryland Government. It is a very momentous thing to amend the Constitution to begin with, but an even larger thing to amend the Declaration of Rights. No change of the Declaration of Rights should be attempted hastily without due consideration and full debate. The fact that this Bill was dropped late in the current session and that it was not cross filed in the House of Delegates (which means there will be no public hearing of this Bill in the House, making today's hearing the only public hearing) should give even supporters of this Bill pause. What is the rush, why not a full consideration and a full debate in both the House of Delegates as well as in the Senate? If the supports believe this Bill will ultimately prevail, it would seem that careful, deliberative and full debate would be allowed. Otherwise it appears that the rush is due to an attempt to put something in place without careful consideration.

what reason that you lose your right to privacy? Considering what was done based on known lies and false reports in order to spy on Candidate Trump. The message to the rest of us is clear. If you can do this to a Candidate for the Presidency who now is in the White House, what can they do to the little people in Maryland.

The message is clear and fully supported by SB 664, your rights come from Government and the Government can take those rights away anytime they please.

That is not the philosophy of Government our country was founded upon. The Declaration of Independence clearly states our rights come from our Creator and not from civil government. The only job of civil government is protect and defend those God given rights.

SB 664 does not comport with the American philosophy of civil government nor the Maryland Declaration of Rights. I urge that you give this Bill an unfavorable report.

Thank you.