

JACK BAILEY
Legislative District 29
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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February 26, 2020

Senate Bill 881 - Firearms - Handgun Qualification License - Firearms Safety Training

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 881 – Firearms – Handgun Qualification License – Firearms Safety Training. This bill repeals the requirement that a firearms safety training course for a Handgun Qualification License include a firearms orientation component that demonstrates the person's safe operation and handling of a firearm.

The State Police has interpreted the provision of law that this bill repeals to require an applicant to fire a single round with a handgun before the HQL can be issued. This single round requirement does not demonstrate proficiency or accuracy and requires an individual to travel to a range to discharge a handgun. This same demonstration can be performed with dummy ammunition, where the person would show safe carry, loading, and firing of a handgun without having to travel to a range.

The most significant barrier posed by this requirement is the difficulty it causes prospective HQL holders living in areas that have either few or no gun ranges for the prospective holder to carry out this live fire requirement. In these jurisdictions, it is harder particularly for residents who have lower incomes and those who rely on mass transit to fulfill this requirement and obtain the HQL.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 881. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bailey".

Senator Jack Bailey
District 29
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties