

Robert Cowan
12023 Yellow Bell Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21044
Email: robcow1@gmail.com

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 4

It will end Youth competitive shooting teams: I'm president of Arlington Rifle and Pistol Club. Our club has an extremely successful Juniors Rifle Program. Five of our Juniors have earned athletic rifle scholarships to college. One of our ladies is now a Midshipman at the United States Naval Academy and is on the USNA Rifle Team. Another one of our ladies has been accepted to both the United States Naval Academy and United States Air Force Academy and will be on their rifle team. One of the ladies who is has a rifle scholarship and is a freshman at Old Miss University is now ranked 20th in the nation. One of our young men earned a rifle scholarship to Ohio State.

One of our Junior ladies will be competing in the U.S. Junior Olympic Games in Colorado Springs.

This sport is very expensive. The basic equipment needed to compete in this sport costs approximately \$5,000 each and is prohibitive for most of our parents. Our club has fundraisers throughout the year to support this program, but money is very tight for our not for profit organization.

The club Junior rifles cost from \$1,900 to \$3,400 each. We had four new Junior team members that we needed to equip. We were able to purchase four new rifles from the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) through their deferred payment program. This program allows us to make payments of 20% every six months to the CMP over a two-year period.

After a Junior demonstrates a commitment to competing in this sport, we issue a rifle to their parent. We issue approximately \$5,000 worth of equipment and rifles to our Junior Club parents, so they can bring their Junior to the range for additional practice. The parents also take their Junior to Local, Regional and National Tournaments. There is no way that our Juniors could compete at the national level that they do, if we didn't run our program this way.

I ask you to please go to our Facebook Page: Arlington Rifle and Pistol Club Junior Program to see what our program is all about.

Transfer ownership of a rifle: This bill would require us to transfer the ownership of the rifle to a parent. The parent who now "owned" our clubs rifle would not be able to allow their spouse or grandparent to bring the Junior to the range for practice, because only the owner of the rifle could have possession of the rifle. Our parents and often their grandparents who are club members bring their Junior to the range

for practice. This would not be permitted if this bill passes, because they would not be the owner of the firearm.

This Bill would require that our club transfer the ownership of the rifle to the parent and would also create problems when the Junior improved and outgrew a rifle or there was a change in our board of directors as to who owns the club rifles.

Women: Our club sponsors Women On Target (WOT) Training where women teach other women firearms safety and competence. These classes are extremely popular. Each class has approximately 20 – 24 women participants. There is a nominal charge for the classes, which covers the cost of food, targets and ammunition. Club members loan their .22 caliber pistols and rifles to the women volunteers who are Certified Instructors to use while teaching the class. We have 25 lanes where women are shooting, so we need to have enough firearms loaned to teach the class. This bill would require that our club members transfer ownership of their firearms to the instructors or come to the range for the duration of the program. This process would be a cumbersome and expensive that would take several weeks and cost a lot of money. It would make it so impractical that it would end this valuable program.

Repairs: This bill would require gun owners would to transfer ownership of their firearms to a gunsmith or to send their firearm to a manufacturer when a repair is needed or there is a recall.

Broken Promises: In 2013, hunters were told that there was no need for them to worry about Maryland requiring rifles and shotguns to be regulated like handguns. Every year, it appears that the Maryland Legislation is working hard to take away our Constitutional rights one bill at a time. This bill proves that the Maryland Legislature will not rest until Marylanders no longer have a right to keep and bear arms.

Penalty: The penalty for loaning or receiving a loaned firearm under this bill would be 5 years in jail and up to a \$10,000 fine. This would make anyone convicted of loaning or receiving a loaned firearm a prohibited person who would be banned from ever owning a firearm for the rest of his or her life. A person who steals a firearm is only guilty of a misdemeanor not a felony and has a maximum penalty of 6 months in jail. The person who steals a firearm would still be eligible to legally own a firearm.

