

Testimony of Josh Hirsh- Vehemently Opposing HB302

I'll start with stating that I believe, in limited public safety circumstances, that the rights of individuals may be taken on a temporary basis, or on a permanent one in even more limited circumstances. I believe everyone is on the same page in that we all want a safer place to live and safer schools for our children.

I'd like to ensure that everyone is on the same page as to what the current laws are:

- 1) It is ALREADY illegal for the general public to carry a firearm onto private school property if they do not have a carry permit issued to them by the Maryland State Police, which is something very few people have.
- 2) It is ALREADY illegal to carry a firearm onto private school property if the school says you may not do so.

The right to use a firearm in self defense and to defend others is a right, and if you are attempting to take that right away, you MUST have statistically significant evidence to prove that the people from whom you are taking their rights, are a risk to the students or others. And in order to achieve that, logically, you MUST have done your research before sponsoring, or co-sponsoring, a proposed law that you are confident that it WILL reduce the number of deaths to students.

At this point, I will ask the delegates to be true to themselves and ask if they have done this research and have the statistical analysis needed to remove the rights of US citizens. The rights being removed are not just of the individuals who possess carry permits, but of the private organizations who own and run the institutions that you are looking to make laws against. That is a very slippery slope- having the Government decide which private entity the Government may prevent firearms from being possessed.

Please look at that statistical backing and research that you did before sponsoring or co-sponsoring this bill and see how many lives have been taken by mass shootings in private schools, and where those lives have been taken by individuals that had been issued carry permits by their state. Then, if you want to take that a step further, look at how many have lost their lives under the same circumstances within the State of Maryland.

In short-, you don't have the statistical backing to remove the rights of people for purpose and circumstances proposed in the bill.