

Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Adding Personal Protection and Self Defense as a good and substantial reason to carry a weapon makes sense. It will better define the law and add clear guidance for the Secretary of the State Police in making determinations to issue Maryland wear and carry permits. I'd like to remind everyone that having a permit to carry a weapon does not absolve one of the responsibilities and possible consequences (if used improperly) of carrying a weapon. Maryland wishes to deny everyday citizens of a civil right by implementing vague regulations and arbitrary standards such as a "good and substantial need". A good and substantial need is self defense. Since wear and carry permits are being denied to people that cite personal protection and self defense as a reason for their request, which is a civil right, it needs to be clearly stated. It's the only reason a citizen should ever need in order to be approved to carry a weapon. Good and substantial reason is left up to interpretation, rooted in personal opinion, which removes the objectivity we should rely on within the law. It makes important laws seem arbitrary.

Ultimately adding self defense to the law as an explicitly stated valid reason would add clarity and structure to the Maryland wear and carry permit process, which should be fair, transparent, and equitable to all Maryland residents, not just those who happen to be anointed by racial, social or economic means. Understandably, laws and restrictions are put in place to ensure those individuals that might abuse a law, commit a crime, or endanger other lives, are prevented from doing so. In this case, those individuals are unable to obtain firearms legally. This law prevents everyday, productive Citizens from exercising a civil right, which laws are supposed to protect.

-Jeffrey Adamson