



**Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team**

**Committee:** Judiciary

**Testimony on:** SB0309 - Handgun Permit – Preliminary Approval

**Position:** Unfavorable

**Hearing Date:** March 31, 2021

**Bill Contact:** Senator Hough

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grassroots organization with more than 2500 members who live in a wide range of communities in Montgomery and Frederick Counties, from Bethesda near the DC line north to Frederick and from Poolesville east to Silver Spring and Olney. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep its members healthy in a safe environment. DTMG strongly opposes SB0309 because it will loosen the requirement for adequate training before getting a permit for a handgun in Maryland, thereby making Maryland less safe.

Maryland law requires anyone wanting to buy, rent or license a new handgun to have taken a training class on Maryland handgun laws, basic handgun safety, and operation and maintenance of a handgun before obtaining the weapon. This is a very low bar to ensure the safety of our all residents and all our communities. According to the Maryland State Police website <https://emdsp.mdsp.org/verification/SearchResults.aspx>, there are at least 1600 Qualified Handgun Instructors throughout every corner of Maryland, so obtaining this required training is not difficult. Since Governor Hogan has allowed virtually all businesses to re-open in Maryland, there should be no barriers to getting the training.

SB0309 will allow someone who has not had any handgun safety training to get a preliminary handgun permit and have that new handgun for 120 days before taking the required training. That's 4 months in which the untrained new handgun owner will put him/herself, family members, neighbors, and community members at risk. This is just dangerous. The recent spate of mass shootings should make us all more careful, not less, with guns! Furthermore, despite much of the national focus on homicide gun deaths, roughly two-thirds of all firearm-related deaths are suicides. Having to go through training first may give someone contemplating suicide more time to seek help.

SB0309 will also create a lot of new paperwork and costly follow-up requirements for handgun owners and dealers, as well as the State Police, who will then have to track each new preliminary approval permit and verify that the new owner does, in fact, take the required training in the required 120-day period. Retrieving a handgun from new owners who do not take the training during the specified 120-day period will also be a new burden on Maryland State Police.

Therefore, DTMG strongly opposes SB0309 and urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on this bill.  
This bill is just unnecessary and unsafe!

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Bartlett  
Co-Lead, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team  
oliviabartlett@verizon.net  
240-751-5599