

Daniel J. Carlin-Weber
HB773 – UNF
House Judiciary Committee
2/24/2021

I am a firearms instructor and advocate of responsible firearms handling and ownership. Currently, I am certified by the Maryland State Police as a Qualified Handgun Instructor, Utah Concealed Firearm Permit Instructor, and NRA Range Safety Officer and Basic Pistol Instructor. Since 2016, I have instructed Marylanders from all walks of life on how to safely operate firearms and the responsibilities that come with their usage. I come before you today in opposition to HB773.

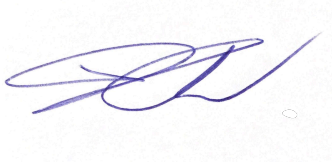
HB773 would have the Handgun Roster Board investigate firearms telematics and the feasibility of implementing some form of tracking on firearms already in existence and those made prospectively. As noted in testimony against the 2020 iteration of this bill, HB35, there are very real legal and logistical blocks against compelling telematics upon privately owned guns and the individuals who own them. <https://bit.ly/2ZKKEod> (at about 15 minutes into the recording). Furthermore, a RAND Corporation study completed in 2020 estimates that about 1-in-3 Maryland households contain at least one firearm. *State-Level Estimates of Household Firearm Ownership*, Terry L. Schell, et al., <https://bit.ly/3qL10ZV>. As noted by the MD Dept. of Legislative Services, almost fifty-four thousand regulated firearms were sold in Maryland last year and Handgun Qualification License applications more than doubled from 2020. *Issue Papers 2021 Legislative Session*, Maryland Dept. of Legislative Services, p. 249, <https://bit.ly/3pKKdoF>. In total, there were more than 300,000 background checks initiated in Maryland last year alone. *Number of background checks done by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) in the United States in 2020, by state*, Statista, <https://bit.ly/3siFIImV>. With these numbers as staggering as they are, it is evident that

any regulation of them via telematics would be a costly affair not only for individual gun owners, but *for the state* as well.

Perhaps a better use of our time and resources could be invested in exploring the feasibility of telematics toward weapons used by law enforcement agencies within our state. Unlike the general population, they do not have millions of firearms in their possession and are acting under the color of law. There are numerous pieces of legislation submitted this year by lawmakers in both chambers that seek to reform or otherwise bring further accountability to police. Departments here in Maryland and around the country rightfully face public scrutiny whenever they resort to firing guns at citizens. Korryn Gaines, Keith Davis Jr, and Gary Willis, are just a few of the local names of those shot by law enforcement where there has been public outcry. Like with body-worn cameras, telematics could potentially provide impartial context for how and why an officer drew and used their service weapon.

Theft and loss are realities for police agencies and telematics might help to recover those arms that go missing. The Trace points to an instance from 2015 where a Glock service weapon stolen from a Baltimore City Police officer's personal car was later used to kill a young adult male and injure an elderly woman. *Law Enforcement's Lost and Stolen Gun Problem*, The Trace, <https://bit.ly/2NOSQRa>. It took two months for that gun to be found and it was only turned up after being used to harm others. Perhaps a study tailored to law enforcement might show how agencies could benefit from the sort of hardware and software that telematics would require. This is a much more practical use case for study and something that might be considered among other reforms.

I urge the committee for an unfavorable report of HB773.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D.J. Carlin-Weber', is positioned above the printed contact information.

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