

***HB0845 – Public Safety – Permit to Carry, Wear or Transport a Handgun – Qualifications***

***Jesse Picard***

***Position – Support***

This bill would clarify that personal protection or self-defense can qualify as a good and substantial reason to carry, wear, and transport a handgun.

This bill would change nothing except add the qualification of self-defense to its list for good and substantial reasons in issuing a permit to carry handgun. It would not alter the rigorous training requirements or arduous application process. All safety measures would still be in place when considering an applicant.

Currently, the qualifications for a Maryland HGP are vague at best but include being retired law enforcement, business owners and employees, and those who can demonstrate the need for personal protection through documented threats. Business owners may be issued an HGP simply for being a business owner that makes large deposits. There is no requirement of providing documented threats against him or her. This structure of qualifications for a Maryland HGP implies that legislators and the MSP believe that money worth defending with a firearm while a person's life is not.

Thirty-five years ago, only one state had unrestricted carry. Only eight were shall-issue. Twenty-five were may-issue. And **16** were **no-issue**. Today, there are 18 states which require no permit to carry a concealed firearm, with two more considering that option. There are 24 which are shall-issue. It is only a matter of time before Maryland and the other seven shall-issue states join the rest of the country in recognizing and honoring the rights of the People. We would be doing ourselves a favor by getting ahead of what is clearly going to happen. People regaining their right to defend themselves in public from threats of death or great bodily harm.

I urge a favorable report on this bill.

Thank you,

Jesse Picard