

Daniel J. Carlin-Weber
HB175 – UNF
Judiciary Committee
3/1/2021

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 and regularly teach the course necessary to receive the Handgun Qualification License (HQL). I'm also a 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 to urge an unfavorable report of House Bill 175.

HB175 would require that vendors maintain a detailed log of every ammunition buyer and subject them to background checks administered by the National Instant Background Check System (NICS). You've likely already heard that the NICS does not permit background checks for non-guns outside of a few exceptions so I will not belabor that point. It would also give the Maryland State Police (MSP) access to the personal identifying information of every Marylander who buys ammunition from an in-State source and isn't otherwise exempt from its requirements. The bill also does not affect sales from out of state.

Supposing the bill could be put into practice, it seems designed to incentivize Marylanders to acquire the HQL. As mentioned in my introduction, I am an instructor and teach the HQL course. The HQL requirements are burdensome and intense for many of my students as it typically costs \$200 with all things accounted for and requires the applicant not only seek a class from someone like me but find a vendor that does LiveScan fingerprinting and pay \$50 to the state. The

MSP then investigates the applicant and later issues the license if approved. I have had potential students not follow through with the process because of the cost and time involved. Some have lacked transportation to meet at the range. Others have taken my course only to fail to finish their applications or get their fingerprints taken. The license acts as a tall hurdle in one exercising their individual right to having a handgun for their personal defense.

The other exemptions provided for in the bill give privileges to those who have federal firearms licenses, are dealers, or are otherwise special. Sadly, the person who has not gone to these lengths or is of circumstance to seek them must pay the price by handing over their personal information and likely paying a fee (background checks are not free) every time they seek the means for their personal defense. This is wrong.

Were any of these requirements needed to vote, fend off a search or seizure under the 4th Amendment, practice a religion, pass out leaflets on a public sidewalk, or have access to an abortion, I know members of this committee *would* rightfully be disturbed. I would as well. However, when it comes to the 2nd Amendment, observances of constitutional and natural rights are suddenly overlooked or tossed aside. Legislators in other states misguidedly justify their attacks on individuals seeking to exercise all of the mentioned rights above by making many of the arguments common to members of this body: public safety, societal well-being, right to life—they're all bad. Bills that put forth more requirements on the public are not mere suggestions but physically enforced by armed members of the State capable of wielding violence in an instant. There have been many hours of testimony before this committee and in Judicial Proceedings by those who were wronged by police and those seeking to restrain their powers and bring forth more accountability. I couldn't agree more with them and understand that this body is working on how to do just that, but those

efforts ring somewhat hollow when this body simultaneously seeks to give the same problematic officers *more* options at their disposal with which to harm the very members of the public they should be protecting and serving.

I urge an unfavorable report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DJCW', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small circle at the end of the final stroke.

Daniel J. Carlin-Weber
300 St Paul Pl., 711
Baltimore, MD 21202
Djc_w@icloud.com