



February 15, 2022

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF Michael Burke, MSI member,
IN SUPPORT OF SB 533

I am a Member of Maryland Shall Issue ("MSI"). Maryland Shall Issue is a Section 501(c)(4), all-volunteer, non-partisan organization dedicated to the preservation and advancement of gun owners' rights in Maryland. My associates and I seek to educate the community, including the Maryland General Assembly, about the right of self-protection, the safe handling of firearms, and the responsibility that goes with possessing and/or carrying a firearm in public.

My background includes over 30 years of military service with the US Army and Maryland National Guard as a Military Police officer, Drill Instructor, and Counterintelligence Agent; over 20 years as a Criminal Investigator/Special Agent with numerous Federal law enforcement agencies. I am an expert in Maryland firearms law, federal firearms law and the law of self-defense. I am also a Maryland State Police certified handgun instructor for the Maryland Wear and Carry Permit and the Maryland Handgun Qualification License ("HQL") and a certified NRA pistol instructor. I appear today as a voter and member of numerous other 2nd Amendment advocacy organizations in SUPPORT of SB 533.

As noted in my introduction, I have personally been involved in the investigation of various crimes in and around the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan region, as well as crimes in other parts of the nation, and overseas since 1976. I've handled investigations, arrests, and the prosecution of thousands of suspects involved in violent crimes against persons, property and the State. Under current law, theft of a handgun is equivalent to stealing a pack of cigarettes or a bottle of milk.

§ 7-105. Motor vehicle theft.

Motor vehicle theft in Maryland is a felony. That specific crime is defined by statute as a felony. The crime of motor vehicle theft specifically provides imprisonment of a maximum of five years and/or a fine that would not exceed \$5,000. The other part of the penalty is that the defendant would be required to return the motor vehicle to the victim or be obligated to pay the owner the full value of the motor vehicle.

It's inconceivable that the General Assembly has such a high level of abhorrence of so-called "gun violence" in this state, knowing that the typical crime involving a handgun involves STOLEN handguns. If the Senate wishes to reduce violent crime here, let it begin by making it known that stealing a HANGUN is considered a FELONY, with well-defined penalties.