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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
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SB 327 – Public Safety – Permit to Carry, Wear, or Transport a Handgun – Qualifications

February 10, 2022

Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

This bill specifies that personal protection or self-defense constitute a good and substantial reason for issuance of a permit to carry, wear, and transport a firearm.

This bill protects the fundamental right of Marylanders to keep and bear arms for personal protection. In *D.C v. Heller*, the Supreme Court held that citizens have the right to possess handguns for self-defense. This protection should apply both inside and outside the home. In *Wrenn v. D.C.*, the U.S Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the District of Columbia's "good reason" requirement for a carry permit was unconstitutional. As a result of this ruling, D.C is now a "Shall Issue" jurisdiction.

This bill would essentially make Maryland a Shall Issue state. Forty-two states and D.C are Shall Issue jurisdictions. Fourteen states have Constitutional Carry, meaning that they do not require a permit to carry, wear, or transport a handgun. None of these laws have resulted in an increase of violent crime in these states.

Maryland has the 3<sup>rd</sup> most restrictive gun laws in the nation. Only New Jersey and Hawaii have more restrictive laws. California and New York allow county sheriffs to determine if a person has a good and substantial reason and therefore have a lot of counties that are Shall Issue in practice. Maryland's extremely restrictive law is not making the state safer. In fact, since 2013 the Maryland General Assembly has passed several pieces of legislation adding more gun control in the state of Maryland. However, the murder rate in Maryland has continued to rise since 2014, after it had been steadily decreasing since 2006.

SB 327 will protect the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Rights of Marylanders without impacting public safety, thus I respectfully ask you to give it a favorable report.