



2A Maryland

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**House Bill 841
Handgun Permit – Preliminary Approval
FAVORABLE**

Simply stated, House Bill 841 and Senate Bill 338 change the sequence of events in the application process for obtaining a permit to wear and carry a handgun in Maryland. It does not in any way change the requirements for a permit. It does enable the applicant to determine whether or not the Maryland State Police will approve the permit as a cost effective and time saving alternative to the current process.

Under the current process, the applicant must successfully complete a rigorous 16-hour training course before submitting an application for a permit to wear and carry a handgun. The cost of this course ranges from \$175 to \$250 depending on which organization is providing the instruction.

The carry permit applicant is still required to submit fingerprints and photographs as part of the preliminary review process. If the Secretary determines the applicant is qualified to receive a permit to wear and carry a handgun, the applicant will be notified. The applicant then has 120 days from the notification date to successfully complete the required training course before the permit can be issued.

Contrary to the statements by an opponent and the written testimony offered by the Attorney General of Maryland in the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, neither this bill nor the Senate cross-file, authorize the issuance of a permit to carry a handgun before all the other requirements have been met. (See page 3, lines 25-27).

In the event the applicant fails to successfully complete the training course and submit proof of completion to the Secretary within the 120 window, the preliminary approval shall be revoked, and the application denied.

House Bill 871
Favorable

SB 0338, the Senate cross-file of House Bill 841 has already passed in the Senate 45-0 and is currently awaiting a hearing in this Committee.

This simple change to the process will result in a saving in terms of time and money for th Maryland citizens and the Maryland State Police.

We strongly urge a favorable report.

Respectfully,

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To: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Office of the Attorney General

Re: **SB0338 – Handgun Permit – Preliminary Approval – Letter of Opposition**

The Office of the Attorney General urges Judicial Proceedings Committee to unfavorably report SB 338. Maryland's wear, carry, and transport handgun law is a carefully crafted compromise that has withstood judicial challenges. Among other things, current law ensures that handgun purchasers have completed a certified firearms training course to help ensure that those who possess firearms know how to do so safely.

Senate Bill 338, however, would require the Secretary of the State Police to issue a preliminary approval of any applicants wear, carry, and transport application while providing the applicant 120 days after receipt of preliminary approval to take the required safety class. This is a classic instance of putting the cart before the horse. **We should, of course, require handgun training before granting preliminary handgun wear, carry, or transport approvals. Otherwise, someone who is unskilled and untrained in the safe possession of firearms could spend upwards of four months wearing, carrying, or transporting the firearm before completing necessary and effective public safety training.**

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Office of Attorney General urges an unfavorable report on SB 338.

cc: Committee Members

FACT CHECK: THE STATEMENT ABOVE IS UNTRUE

HB 338 / SB 338 Page 3, Lines 25-27

25 (5) NOTHING IN THIS SUBSECTION MAY BE CONSTRUED TO
26 AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF A PERMIT WITHOUT COMPLETION OF A CERTIFIED
27 FIREARMS TRAINING COURSE UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.