

Daniel J. Carlin-Weber
HB816 – FAV
Ways and Means Committee
2/23/2022

I am a professional firearms instructor and advocate of responsible firearms handling and ownership. I teach through my Baltimore City-based company, C-W Defense, and hold numerous credentials related to firearms instruction including being recognized as a Qualified Handgun Instructor by the Maryland State Police. I currently maintain credentials to provide firearms instruction from the National Rifle Association (NRA), United States Concealed Carry Association (USCCA), and the State of Utah's Bureau of Criminal Identification (UT BCI). Since 2016, I have taught Marylanders from all walks of life how to safely operate firearms and the responsibilities that come with them. I come before you today to urge a favorable report for House Bill 816.

House Bill 816 would exempt the first \$500 from sales tax for firearms storage products. With the introduction of this year's Jaelynn's Law, bills SB676 and HB659, and Maryland's already strict storage requirements under Md. Criminal Law § 4-104, this sort of tax incentive should be welcomed. Even without the current or proposed storage laws in Maryland, this bill incentivizes good practices by making it that much easier for citizens to acquire good firearms storage solutions or better ones than they currently have. 2020 saw record-breaking gun sales with an estimated 40% of buyers being first-time gun owners. *DC area joins nationwide trend of first-time gun ownership*, WTOP, September 22, 2020, <https://wtop.com/local/2020/09/dc-area-joins-nationwide-trend-of-first-time-gun-ownership/>. 2021 was little different with nearly 20 million firearms being sold during the year. *U.S. Bought Almost 20 Million Guns Last Year – Second-Highest Year On Record*. Forbes, January 5, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joewalsh/2022/01/05/us-bought-almost-20-million-guns-last-year---second-highest-year-on-record/?sh=35d3db113bbb>. Of these sales,

Marylanders purchased more than 400,000 firearms. *NICS Firearms Checks – Year by State and Type*. Federal Bureau of Investigations. https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/nics_firearm_checks_-_year_by_state_type.pdf/view. Simply put, there are a lot of guns and a lot of gun owners and HB816 would make storage solutions for them that much easier. With so many new gun owners, it behooves the state to find ways to encourage people to store their guns securely without resorting to the threat of criminal or civil penalty and this bill does so without having a significant impact on the State's sales tax revenues. Passage of the bill might mean that a new parent buys a safe instead of a locker or even a locker instead of nothing at all, and that reason alone makes this a good idea for the General Assembly to move this bill.

I do recommend to all my students that they purchase whatever safes or lockers their lifestyles require and their budgets permit. Gun ownership is a costly affair. For instance, Maryland law requires that potential handgun buyers first acquire the Handgun Qualification License (HQL), which is a process that on average costs upwards of \$200. Between the licensing requirements, the gun itself, and ammunition, the typical Marylander is spending about \$1000 BEFORE purchasing the means to secure that handgun. Providing a tax incentive to do so will only cause more gun owners to seek better methods of securing their firearms.

I urge a favorable report.



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