

DC-W_HB816_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Daniel Carlin-Weber

Position: FAV

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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HB0816_Testimony_Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: John Josselyn

Position: FAV



2A Maryland

2A@2AMaryland.org

House Bill 816

Sales and Use Tax -Exemption - Firearm Safety Devices

Favorable

Typically, bills with the words “firearms safety” in the title have nothing to do with safety and are simply gun control bills masquerading as safety measures. These bills are normally punitive provisions and are counterproductive. Some contain language so restrictive and confusing in nature that the bill is impossible to understand much less comply with.

This is not true of House Bill 816 which is exactly what its title implies, an exemption from sales and uses taxes up to the first \$500 of the cost of the purchase of devices explicitly designed to enhance home firearm safety such as locks, lock boxes, and/or a gun safe.

House Bill 816 is an opportunity for the Maryland General Assembly to mitigate the adversarial relationship with law-abiding gun owners and take a positive step toward promoting firearm safety.

We do recommend that HB 816 be amended to expand the sales tax exemption to the full cost of devices intended to provide safe storage of firearms.

We urge this Committee to return a favorable report on House Bill 816.

Respectfully,

John H. Josselyn, Director
2A Maryland
MSP Licensed Handgun Instructor
NRA Certified Instructor
Range Safety Officer

HB 00816-2022 Ltr to House Ways and Means.pdf

Uploaded by: Joseph Winter

Position: FAV



Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc.

P.O. Box 975
Hagerstown, MD. 21741-0975

Joe Winter, President
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(301) 712-8213

February 21, 2022

Honorable Members of the
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Md. 21401

**Subject: HB-0816 Sales and Use Tax - Exemption - Firearm Safety Devices
SUPPORT**

Dear Honorable Delegates:

I represent the Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (WCFSC) which is comprised of eighteen hunting clubs and sportsmen's associations with nearly six thousand individual members in Washington County. As President of the Federation, I work together with the leadership of a much wider Coalition of Western Maryland Sportsmen's Clubs for the benefit of not only Washington County Sportsmen, but also for the five most western counties of Maryland.

I, as a private citizen of this state and as the representative of the Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc. **strongly urge you to support HB-0816, Titled: Sales and Use Tax - Exemption - Firearm Safety Devices.**

Over the past decade, and more and more increasingly, there has been legislation passed that requires handguns, regulated firearms and long guns to be safely stored out the reach of children. In recent years, the regulation was modified to define not only what must be "safely stored" (to include ***all firearms***, including sporting rifles and shotguns) but increased the age up from children to any age below 18 (Minors). Failure to do so can result in fines and imprisonment.

Legislation seeks to require that all firearms be stored in a manner that a person under the age of eighteen cannot gain access to an operable firearm and strongly suggests that an inaccessible locked room or free-standing gun safe of some type is the appropriate method to prohibit access to firearms.

Firearms safety is every gun owner's responsibility. It is our position however, that if the government **intends to require** that all gun owners store all firearms in such a specific manner, the expense of such devices that meet the intentions of the legislation should not only be tax free, but perhaps also tax deductible.

Again, I strongly urge you to support HB-0816.

Respectfully,

Joe Winter

Joe Winter
President, WCFSC

"Sportsmen & Conservationists, working together..."

Katie_Novotny_FAV_HB816.pdf

Uploaded by: Katie Novotny

Position: FAV

Written Testimony of Katie Novotny in support of HB816

21 February 2022

I am a member of multiple gun rights organizations. I am a certified Range Safety Officer. I compete in multiple shooting events. I am an avid firearms collector. I support HB816.

This bill allows for an exemption under the sales and use tax for the first \$500 of the purchase price for certain firearm safety devices. This is a common sense bill to encourage the purchase of these items, as well as making them more affordable.

Maryland requires every handgun to have an integrated mechanical safety device installed before it leaves the FFL. One of the common ones used is the Omega Gunlock. From their website, this item costs \$29.99. <http://www.omegagunlock.com/order-now/semi-auto-pistol-locks> This is a cost to the consumer above and beyond the cost of the HQL (training, fingerprints, fee to MSP for background check), the \$10 MSP background check fee, and the cost of the firearm. While the tax on this item is not significant at about \$1.80, it is an added cost. For these locks, a different one must be purchased for different calibers. Considering this is a state mandated requirement, it makes sense to allow an exemption for the sales tax on safety items like these, as exceptions are made for other products that serve the greater good.

Now let's talk about safes. Existing Maryland law requires loaded firearms to be inaccessible to children 16 and under. So for unloaded firearms, a cable lock was acceptable. As a matter of fact you could get these for free from Project ChildSafe, ran by the National Shooting Sports Foundation. <https://projectchildsafe.org/> These met the requirement for keeping a loaded firearm away from children, but they do nothing to prevent theft. They also do not meet the standards spelled out in SB676/HB659 (Jaelynn's Law), a proposed firearms storage law before the legislature this session. To meet the standards of this law, and to prevent theft, you will need a safe. Tractor Supply Company sells firearms safes. They are not top of the line, but they are generally accessible to most people in this state so we will look at prices for their safes. For long gun safes, it is well known that safes never actually fit the advertised number of firearms. It is generally safe to multiply the advertised number by .7 to know how many firearms a safe will actually hold. This very basic Winchester branded safe advertised to hold 12 firearms is currently priced at \$399.99. <https://www.tractorsupply.com/tsc/product/winchester-gun-safe-12-gun-ts12-30> Tax on this item would be \$24. This is a no frills safe with a minimum fire rating and 14 ga steel walls. It is offering basic security for a fairly low price for a very small number of firearms. Even for a safe at this price point, this bill would save a consumer real money, at the least offsetting the cost to have this 212 lb item delivered.

Stepping up to a slightly nicer safe that is made here in the USA, Tractor Supply offers some TSC exclusive entry level safes from Liberty Safe. These safes are much more secure than their lower end counterparts. This 30 gun safe <https://www.tractorsupply.com/tsc/product/liberty-safe-liberty-revere-30-gun-dial-lock-safe-with-40-minute-fire-rating-rv30-gym-dp> costs \$899.99, an increase of \$200 over the past year, thank you inflation, and offers some updated security features from the lower end safes, as well as enhanced fire protection. The 375 lb weight also prevents theft of the entire safe. The tax on this item would be \$54. However, this bill only allows for tax exemption for the first \$500 of the

purchase price, bringing the tax burden on this item down to \$24. The tax exemption on the first \$500 allows for a maximum tax savings of \$30.

If looking for storage for a single handgun, a person might opt for a small handgun safe such as this one made by Tracker Safe. <https://www.tractorsupply.com/tsc/product/tracker-safe-single-pistol-safe-with-biometric-lock-small-sps-03b> This safe holds one handgun and costs \$179.99. Tax would be \$10.80. This may not seem like a significant outlay of money, but for many of the record number of new gun owners, that may make a difference in allowing them to purchase a security device sooner rather than later.

Another reality is that much of the state is very close to Delaware, where someone may drive to purchase a big ticket item without having to pay sales tax, losing that sale for businesses in this state. Not all people have that ability, however. The people who would most benefit from this bill are less likely to be able to travel in order to save that tax money.

The out of control inflation that is impacting this country has increased the financial strain on many Marylanders. Wages have not kept up with the rising cost of goods, and this is one small way to ease burdens on Marylanders wallets. This body is likely to pass a bill requiring storage of firearms and ammunition in safes. It makes sense to make these items more affordable to purchase, so that citizens may be better able to comply with these requirements.

In the interest of safety, it makes sense to pass this bill and reduce the burden on Marylanders who wish to store their firearms responsibly.


Because of these reasons above, I request a favorable report.

Katherine Novotny
District 35B
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HB 816 TaxExemptionSafetyDevice.pdf

Uploaded by: Neil Parrott

Position: FAV



HB 816

Sales and Use Tax Exemption

Firearm Safety Devices

FEBRUARY 23, 2022

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

SPONSORED BY DELEGATE NEIL C. PARROTT



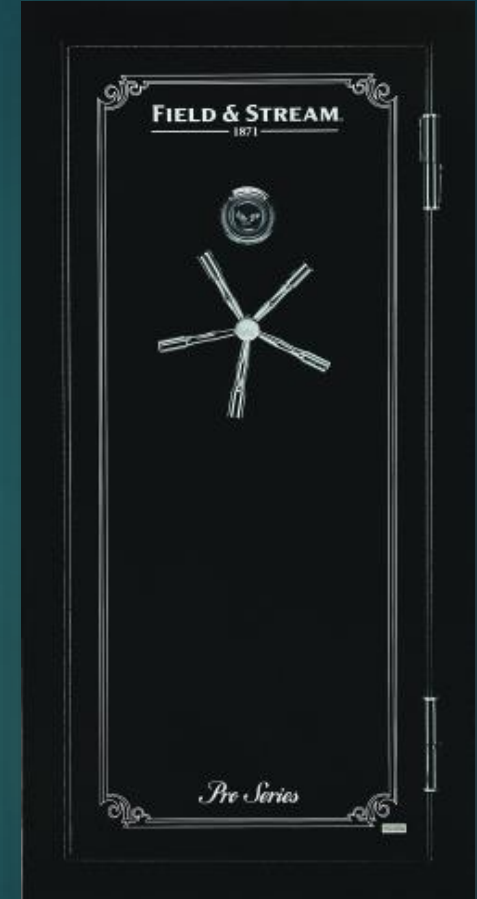
Parents who want to keep their families safe may buy firearms for protection.

Unfortunately, sometimes children find their parents' firearms and accidentally fire them, causing injury and death.

This could be prevented if the firearms were secured in a gun safe or lockbox to prevent them from being accidentally handled.

What Does This Bill Do?

- ▶ HB 816 provides a sales tax exemption for the first \$500 spent on firearm safety devices
- ▶ Provides an incentive for firearm holders to purchase safety devices for their firearms



Other states have firearm safety tax exemptions:

- ▶ Tennessee (tax exempt for a year 2021-2022)
- ▶ Maine (2021)
- ▶ Texas (2021)
- ▶ West Virginia (2021)
- ▶ Connecticut
- ▶ Massachusetts
- ▶ New Jersey
- ▶ Washington
- ▶ Michigan



<https://www.law360.com/tax-authority/articles/>

<https://www.kawc.org/2022-01-17/legislation-would-lower-sales-tax-on-guns>

<https://www.protectandlock.com/gun-safe-tax-deductible/>

“If our guns are not safely stored, a tragedy can happen when we least expect it. Removing the sales and use taxes on safety devices is just one practical way to encourage and promote safe gun habits.”

- Michigan Senator
Tonya Schuitmaker

UNSAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS POSES A THREAT IN HOMES WITH CHILDREN

A study found that in homes with children and firearms...



HAD FIREARMS IN UNLOCKED PLACES



KEPT GUNS WITH NO TRIGGER LOCKS IN UNLOCKED PLACES

SMARTGUNLAWS.ORG

SIMPLE SAFETY DEVICES CAN PREVENT ACCIDENTAL DEATHS

About a third of accidental deaths caused by firearms can be prevented by the use of a child-proof safety lock and a device that indicates whether a firearm is loaded.


CHILD-PROOF
SAFETY LOCK

+

INDICATOR

LOADING
INDICATOR

=

31%
FEWER
ACCIDENTAL
DEATHS


SMARTGUNLAWS.ORG

Benefits of HB 816

- ▶ Creates better safety in the home
- ▶ Protects against unauthorized use and accidental discharge
- ▶ Encourages people to buy safer storage units – such as a gun safe - which is more convenient and more likely to be used

But What About Loss of Tax Revenue?

- ▶ The fiscal note indicates a one-time fee of \$81,300 for notifications.
- ▶ It estimates a loss of revenue up to \$550,000/year.
- ▶ This is a small cost to pay for increased safety – how much is one life worth



The state should do ALL it can to
promote gun safety.

Please vote in favor for HB 816

Questions?

HB816_Nicholas_DeTello.pdf

Uploaded by: Nicholas DeTello

Position: FAV

Nicholas DeTello

HB0816 Sales and Use Tax - Exemption - Firearm Safety Devices

Favorable

2/16/2022

I am a student, Eagle Scout, family man, as well as a Civil Rights Enthusiast. I have voted independently, I am currently registered as a Libertarian, and I have a diverse set of views (some left, some right). These include but are not limited to: equality, limiting abuse of police power, protection of minority groups (such as my direct LGBT family) and decriminalization of victimless crimes (drug possession, gun possession, exercising civil rights, etc.). As a Maryland gunowner I am frequently subjected to new and deceptive forms of gun control, including arbitrarily difficult storage requirements. Additionally, since gun ownership is burdensomely expensive in this state, saving enough money to buy a sufficiently secure safe is often difficult or impossible for less privileged prospective gun owners. For this reason I urge a favorable report of House Bill 816.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas DeTello". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Nicholas" and last name "DeTello" clearly legible.

Nicholas DeTello

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ndetello@hotmail.com

Maryland_House_Bill_816_2022.pdf

Uploaded by: Paul Cheakalos

Position: FAV

Written Testimony Supporting Maryland House Bill 816

Paul Cheakalos
Montgomery County, District 19
Support for House Bill 816

February 21, 2022

I am writing to ask you to provide a favorable report for House Bill 816, which will allow a sales tax exemption for the first \$500 of the price of firearm safety devices, including safes, lockboxes, trigger locks, etc. This will slightly bring down the cost for new firearm safety devices, which will help keep firearms secure from unauthorized individuals.

Currently, when purchasing a handgun in Maryland, a simple cable gunlock is included. After spending hundreds, if not, thousands of dollars at a gun shop, many gunowners may overlook more advanced firearm safety devices, such as gun safes and lockboxes; however, this tax exemption may encourage them to purchase additional safety devices, which will help reduce theft and/or accidental discharge of a firearm.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the committee to issue a favorable report for House Bill 816, as it will encourage individuals to purchase firearm safety devices. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to express my concerns.

Sincerely,

Paul Cheakalos