



## Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

### Testimony in Support of SB 1 - Criminal Law - Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms - Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)

TO: Senator Will Smith, Jr. Chair and Members of the Judicial Proceedings  
Committee

FROM: Ken Shilling, UULM-MD Gun Violence Prevention, Lead Advocate  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.

DATE: February 7, 2023

Unitarians Universalists strive to promote justice and equity for everyone. It is our collective responsibility to achieve equity and justice in society. I recently explained to teenagers that we did NOT have active shooter drills when I was in school 50 or 60 years ago. They were stunned by this truth.

If citizens can be gunned down at work, in school, in so many places, then citizens are not safe while pursuing their ordinary lives. I have worshiped in Maryland, knowing of potential gun threats to places of worship. I have worshiped with police protection. I shouldn't have to.

We have the most guns per capita than any other country. We have twice as many guns per capita than the citizens of rogue states, (like Sudan and Somalia) have in their Civil Wars. More guns do not make us safe. Even worse, 'Open Carry Anywhere' threatens our right to assemble without the threat of gun violence. While a person may intend to be a "Good Guy with a Gun," all the people around him see is the gun.

We promote the general well-being of all people in society, and their rights to life and liberty. We support the common-sense restrictions to open-carry. People must not knowingly wear, carry, or transport firearms into places of public accommodation.

The measure before you today is another tool to protect all of us from gun violence. We ask you to stand on the side of love and justice. We urge you to vote for this bill and others that strengthen Maryland's gun violence prevention laws.

We urge a favorable report,

*Ken Shilling*

Gun Violence Prevention Lead Advocate