

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB 001 (February 7, 2023)

Submitted by Theodore E. Mathison

322 Lazywood Court

Millersville, MD 21108

Email: tem2@verizon.net; Ph: 410-987-9591

Senate Bill 001 Criminal Law – Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms – Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)

I am writing to oppose SB 001 because it creates firearms restrictions that are unrealistic, impossible to meet and will entrap innocent Maryland citizens exposing them to imprisonment.

The Bill appears intended to restrict the concealed, on-person carrying of firearms by citizens authorized to do so by the Maryland State Police. However, it not only restricts concealed carry firearms, but the transport of rifles and shotguns throughout the State. I have been a resident of Maryland since 1970 and have enjoyed hunting, and in particular, the target shooting sports. I have been an instructor for many years in the State's Hunter Safety program teaching firearms safety, wildlife conservation and shooting ethics. Under the Bill, I would not be able to participate in the shooting sports because it would be virtually impossible to transport a firearm anywhere in Maryland, without coming within 100 feet of gas stations, restaurants, and other places of "public accommodation". Finally, the Bill, if passed, would prohibit anyone from transporting firearms transiting Maryland to another destination.

There would be a severe financial impact from the Bill's implementation as well. Many businesses and individuals within the State are financially dependent upon the shooting sports industry, in particular hunting. They would suffer a drastic reduction in income and many would go out of business. Currently, Maryland receives approximately \$6 million annually in federal Pittman-Robertson-Act funds from the sales tax on ammunition and firearms sold in the State. These funds, which support wildlife refuges, private/public habitat management and the State's Hunter Safe Program, would be lost.

Turning to the question of carry permit firearms, it seems criminal to deprive individuals, particularly those who carry payrolls and other valuable items for business, as well as the average citizen who is deeply concerned about self-protection, the ability to carry a firearm. These individuals have undergone a background check by the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, have been thoroughly vetted by Maryland's leading law enforcement agency and have undergone thorough training. Statistics compiled by the Crime Prevention Research Center (*Wall Street Journal*, 03/31/2017) indicate those throughout the United States who legally carry firearms commit fewer crimes than are committed by established law enforcement agency personnel. Why then is there a need to restrict further concealed carry?

Accordingly, I strongly urge that SB 001 receive an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,


Theodore E. Mathison