

SB1 - Criminal Law - Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms - Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)

I am writing to oppose, and urge an unfavorable report on, SB1.

It appears there is a desire by the sponsors to set aside studies, such as those in 2017 by John Lott of the Crime Prevention Research Center, that established concealed carry holders commit firearms violations at rates dramatically less than – about 1/6 the rate – of even the police and still make carrying a firearm nearly impossible in Maryland using “permissions” as the device. I’m going to ignore the impositions the proposed law will place on Maryland Wear and Carry permit holders. The proposed law is unnecessarily restrictive and imposes a pointless burden on law enforcement officers and the general public.

The law specifically includes transport of firearms in the text. It appears the proposed law would require anyone with a firearm within a vehicle to receive permission to be on nearly any property. That is absurd.

One need only think of gas stations. Nearly all have a soda fountain, something the proposed law specifically mentions. We know the following scenario happens every day: someone with a long gun, in full compliance with all current Maryland law (fully cased, inaccessible, unloaded in the back of a car) pulls into a gas station to buy gas. The current law will make that act a crime unless the firearm owner has obtained permission from the gas station owner/operator to enter the property.

Let us suppose for a moment a law enforcement officer is at the gas station and sees a rifle case in the rear of a hatchback car. Rather than continuing with their duties, the officer is now obligated to discover whether the hatchback owner has permission to be on the gas station property with the firearm. As that will be highly unlikely, the officer will be in the position of being forced to conduct an arrest of a member of the public for *buying gas* without prior permission.

It is extraordinarily unfair, and imprudent, to put members of law enforcement in such a position. They are unfairly demonized now and do not need to contend with being further pilloried by being required to arrest law-abiding members of the general public for *buying gas*.

Sincerely,

Ian Rus Maxwell

18307 Crestmount Road

Boyd MD 20841

ianrus.maxwell@gmail.com

301.325.7152