

Written testimony to OPPOSE SB 1 & SB 118

Date: Tuesday, 7 FEB 2023

Hello Senators:

I am writing to urge you to OPPOSE SB 1 & SB 118. As a LICENSED, LEGAL, firearms owner in Baltimore, Maryland, I think it is shortsighted, not to mention utterly biased, that my LEGAL rights would be curtailed & I would ultimately be made a criminal to carry my LEGAL firearm.

I am a US military veteran, a black woman, a mother, a firearms instructor, educated, a homeowner, a taxpayer & I have taken all the legal & statutory requirements to obtain & carry my legally owner firearm. As a black woman, I am one of millions of a growing demographic to obtain the education & training requirements to safely carry my firearm. I live in one of the most dangerous cities in our country & at the very least, I want to have a fighting chance to save my life & the lives of my loved ones. To note, I searched for data on violent crimes committed by legal gun owners in Baltimore & Maryland, at large-I was unable to find one instance where this has occurred. Yet, in Baltimore specifically, for the last 8 years, citizens have endured over 300 violent, gun-related deaths, each year, perpetrated by violent criminals who ILLEGALLY have obtained firearms. To my knowledge, not one of these violent deaths have been committed by a licensed, legal, firearm owner as an act of violence.

Unlike you, by the nature of your job, I don't have the luxury of summoning 24/7 security for myself or my family. Every minute that I would have to wait for police assistance is a minute that my life dwindles in the hands of the criminals. Nevertheless, SB 1 & SB 118 would have the effect of making me, a legal & licensed firearm owner, a virtual criminal while the actual criminals will not be affected one iota by these bills. SB 1 & SB 118 will make carrying my legal firearm, outside my home, a crime.

While you may believe you are saving lives with these bills, what you are actually doing is placing more innocent lives at risk of harm & death, without any chance to defend ourselves. Our US Constitution includes the second amendment-the same Constitution on which I swore an oath to protect our country. I am a part of this same country & I certainly have the right to protect my life, as well. Your misguided efforts will do more harm than good, while you maintain the luxury of paid, taxpayer provided security, at my expense.

Evie Harris
Baltimore