

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 1 & SB 118. As a licensed and legal firearms owner in Rockville, Maryland, I believe that it is unfair and unjust for my legal rights to be restricted, making me a criminal for carrying my legally owned firearm.

I am a Latino man, a father, homeowner, taxpayer, and highly educated. I have fulfilled all the necessary legal and statutory requirements to obtain and carry my legally owned firearm. I am part of a growing demographic of Latinos who have obtained the education and training necessary to carry firearms safely.

I live in Montgomery County, where recent reports show that various types of crimes have significantly increased, particularly violent crime. Furthermore, assaults, robberies, and sex offenses are also on the rise. As a minority, I want to have the ability to defend myself and my loved ones in the face of danger. However, SB 1 & SB 118 would infringe on my right to self-defense and put other minorities, such as blacks and Latinos, at a higher risk of gun violence.

As a private citizen, I do not have the privilege of having 24/7 security for myself or my family, unlike those in positions of authority. Every minute that I must wait for police assistance puts my life and the lives of my loved ones in the hands of criminals. However, SB 1 & SB 118 would make it a crime for me, a legal and licensed firearms owner, to carry my firearm outside my home, while actual criminals would not be impacted by these bills.

While these bills may be aimed at saving lives, they put more innocent lives at risk by denying them the opportunity to defend themselves. The Second Amendment of the US Constitution, which I have sworn to protect, guarantees my right to protect my life and the lives of my loved ones.

Leonardo Marino