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The Honorable Senator William C. Smith Jr., Chairman
And Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Chairman Smith and Members,

RE: **SB0001** – Criminal Law – Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms –
Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023) -- **OPPOSE**

Officer Edward Paden, Jr. was off duty on September 1, 2010, but it was a day he became a hero (and was subsequently awarded a Congressional Badge of Bravery).

A man named James Lee, with a backpack full of IED devices and a gun, was holding three hostages in the lobby of the Discovery Building in Silver Spring. Officer Paden risked his life to help responding officers and ensure the safety of those hostages.

If SB0001 had been law back in 2010, the outcome that day could have been very different. Rather than getting an award for his valor, Officer Paden would be under scrutiny for his actions. It's unclear whether off duty police officers would be considered "persons" who are held to the restrictions under this bill; but well-trained citizens with concealed carry permits would have faced up to a year in jail and a minimum of a misdemeanor charge if they chose to help and step within 100 feet of the Discovery Building.

What is this bill trying to accomplish? Shouldn't we be targeting criminals and their use of firearms? The vast majority of people who commit homicides are not concealed carry permit holders. A 15-year study showed that just 0.7% -- 7/10ths of 1% -- of firearm related homicides were committed by permit holders¹.

Something else notable: Because of a previous 2008 incident, James Lee (the criminal with the gun and bombs in his backpack) had been warned by a judge not to go within 500 feet of the Discovery Building. But that didn't stop him, did it? It's unlikely that SB0001 would have deterred him from using his firearm to take hostages.

This bill hurts law-abiding people who could help in a defensive criminal situation. They are not the problem here, yet this bill targets them as a public safety threat. This bill does nothing to deter criminals.

¹ <https://www.heritage.org/firearms/commentary/debunking-the-mythconcealed-carry-killers>



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Citizens with concealed carry permits have gone through rigorous training in gun safety and relevant laws. They register their firearms. They have met the high standards required to receive the government's approval to carry a firearm.

SB0001 would also infringe on Second Amendment rights, which MFRW strongly supports. The Supreme Court has ruled in support of Second Amendment rights, affirming that an individual is not constrained to defend himself/herself only in the home, but can do so outside the home as well without having to prove a "proper cause" such as a prior threat to their safety. Enacting a law like SB0001 that essentially keeps people from defending themselves outside the home, especially in high crime areas, is in direct conflict with our Second Amendment rights.

For all of these reasons, please give **SB0001** an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

Sincerely,

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