

SB1

Wear and Carry Bill

Hello. My name is Donna Worthy. I am the President of the Maryland Licensed Firearms Dealers Association and also President and sole owner of Worth-A-Shot Firearms in Millersville Maryland. I am testifying today on behalf of both organizations.

I am strongly opposed to SB1.

In order for a citizen to receive a carry permit in Maryland, a citizen must get fingerprints, pass a background check from the Maryland State Police, take a 16 hour training course, and pass a qualification course.

Once completing the requirements the citizen is given a wear and carry permit. These citizens have been cleared by the Maryland State Police. These citizens have passed all background checks. These citizens were given the green light by the Maryland State Police that they are approved to carry a firearm. SB1 does not target the criminals, it targets these citizens. The responsible law abiding citizens. The responsible approved permit holder that could save your families life one day. The kind of citizen you all would wish was there when you dial 911 and the response time is over 5 minutes. The citizen that could remove the threat of the people you truly want to target in this bill. The criminals. This bill gives the criminal an upper hand. It lets them know that there are no good guys with guns to stop them.

Under this bill a law abiding citizen is not allowed to carry their firearm nearly anywhere. They are no longer permitted to protect their family or themselves.

This bill states that you could not transport your firearm within 100 feet of public accommodation. There is currently not even an exception for Gun stores. Meaning that after a person legally purchases a firearm from a Firearm retailer, they cannot legally transport the firearm out of the store. This would prevent Firearm Retailers from selling firearms and forcing them out of business.

I would also like to point out Firearm establishments that are in a strip mall, or are located within 100 feet of another business. Even if there is an exception for Firearm establishments for transportation, would the buyer now be in violation because the firearms establishment was within 100 feet of another business.

This would personally affect my store. We are located in a strip mall. We have been there for 15 years. We have been approved for all permits and licenses to legally operate our store from this location. How does SB1 affect us or our customers?

Worth-A-Shot is also a training center. Often students will transport their own firearms to our location to learn safe handling with their firearm. These are law abiding citizens, who legally purchased their firearms, and are now trying to be responsible by taking additional training. Under SB1 are they now unable to transport their legally purchased firearm to our training center to receive more training?

This bill may be intended to reduce crime. But in fact you would be doing quite the opposite.

Please understand that I am in full agreement for stronger penalties for those that do not follow the laws with firearms, but you are targeting those that are following all the laws. These citizens aren't the problem here.

I was injured in the line of duty as a Baltimore City Police Officer. I witnessed an enormous amount of violence in my time there. I can't remember one time that a citizen legally carrying their firearm with a carry permit, was part of the problem. In fact I remember many times as an officer, not only hoping but praying that a citizen with a carry permit was nearby.

If reducing gun violence and crime is your objective, then we are on the same team here. But be clear that this bill does not accomplish that. It only targets the good guys.

For these reasons and many more I strongly urge an unfavorable report for SB1.

Thank you.