

SB0001 “Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms – Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)

Position – Unfavorable

Paige Burns

3032 Eutaw Forest Drive, Waldorf, MD 20603

March 27, 2023

This letter is written in opposition to SB0001. As American citizens the Constitution protects our right to bear arms. Maryland law currently restricts gun owners significantly. Those who possess a Wear and Carry Permit obtained it by paying fees, being fingerprinted and background checked and completing the required training, which includes an emphasis on safety. Anyone with a permit has been certified by an instructor as competent to safely use and carry a firearm. Many people applied for and received a permit by meeting the requirement of citing a good and substantial reason to carry a firearm.

In seeking to enact this law, you are not only creating multiple difficulties for those who lawfully carry firearms; you are also putting their lives at risk. To be prohibited from carrying a firearm within any of the noted places would necessarily require an ever-changing map of restricted areas, creating a navigational labyrinth.

When in daily transit, those who lawfully carry firearms are often required to make decisions regarding safe storage within a vehicle, due to unplanned circumstances, emergency stops and the like; all governed by various complicated laws and restrictions open to interpretation that cause great difficulty for those trying wholeheartedly to follow the law. Firearms are much safer when carried by a person with a permit rather than left locked in a vehicle which could be burglarized.

This bill is unnecessary and would negatively impact law abiding citizens. Are the lives of those who ignore the law more important than those who continually abide by it? People with nefarious intent are not concerned about the laws at all. If someone is determined to commit a violent act (which is itself illegal, unless done for the purposes of self-defense) they will not be deterred from criminal behavior by this law. I would argue that any place is safer, in general, when permit holders are present with firearms. The more places advertised as “gun free zones,” the more targets created for those wishing to do harm. Most lawfully armed citizens, when put in harm’s way by a criminal, would protect themselves, their families and anyone else in the vicinity.

Violence, in any form, is not stopped by creating layers of mindless, unenforceable laws. Evil actions emanate from people’s hearts, hence the need for firearm possession for purposes of protection. Firearms are called “great equalizers” for a reason. Many people, including myself, may not have the ability to defend themselves by physically fighting someone or running away, but with a firearm we stand a fighting chance. Danger abounds; instead of being passive, I have chosen readiness and action. Stop trying to disarm law abiding citizens. Focus on catching, punishing and rehabilitating criminals and better yet, finding ways to help people avoid that path altogether.