

Chair of the MD House Committee

Judicial Committee

Senate Bill 1

Tuesday May 28, 2023

1:00 p.m. (EST)

IN OPPOSITION

I am testifying in opposition of this bill. I'm a Disabled Navy Veteran with a family of four in Southern Maryland. I applied for Maryland Handgun Qualification License in 2019 and my concealed carry permit in 2020-my reasons for obtaining a gun was solely for self-defense and the defense of my family. I am a responsible, law-abiding citizen; I have never been involved in any criminal activity-especially any illegal activity involving firearms. Senate Bill 1 takes away my ability to defend myself from the actual threat-the criminals themselves. Crime involving firearms has increased significantly over the past few years, not from law abiding, responsible gun-owners like myself, but from those who have no regard for obeying the law and feel they have a right to intrude on an innocent citizen by any means they deem necessary. SB 1 places a significant burden on the places individuals can carry; it is in direct opposition to the New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen decision decided in June 2022.

I no longer feel safe when leaving my home; the military has taught me to be always vigilant and I feel I have to be even more attentive to my surroundings due to the increase in crime. I feel this bill sees me as the criminal and not the actual individuals committing crimes. I do not see this bill as granting me my Constitutional right under the Second Amendment as a responsible citizen; I should have the right to defend myself if the need arises. The places listed in this bill almost entirely prevents me from carrying my firearm completely in public-thus placing myself and my family in a vulnerable state.

I deserve the right to travel in public without the fear of becoming a victim of a criminal that has every intent on causing harm; if such an unfortunate event occurred, this bill would not allow me to defend myself or my family; I beg the question, who would want to feel helpless and not be afforded the opportunity to defend themselves in a terrifying situation such as this? There's a strong possibility the criminal would be armed with a firearm that could result in a loss of life for myself or my family member. How could I continue my life witnessing such a traumatic event and not be able to at least intervene? I don't want to think about a situation such as this, but this is a reality, we witness these events frequently when turning on the news. I don't understand how anyone can see this bill as empowerment for those that opposes firearms, when I feel they themselves would have a difference of opinion if something so drastic and terrifying as my example given happened to them or their family members. It is not the firearm that is the issue-it is the person in possession of the firearm that determines whether or not the weapon will be used for its intended purpose, self-defense.

Don't view citizens like myself as the problem; look at those that commit crimes with illegal firearms as the actual problem. Placing restrictions on the places most vulnerable doesn't stop the criminals from committing crimes; a criminal doesn't obey the law, a criminal opposes the law and everything it stands for to protect innocent people. I strongly urge this committee to oppose this bill, think about those that are trying to do what's right and not defend those that do not have a regard for doing what's right.

Respectfully,

David Holly