

# WESTERN MARYLAND SPORTSMEN'S COALITION, INC.

Garrett Allegany Washington Frederick Carroll

March 27, 2023

Honorable Members of the  
Maryland House Judiciary Committee  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Md. 21401

**Subject: SB -0001 Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms- Restrictions  
(Gun Safety Act of 2023) OPPOSE**

Dear Honorable Delegates:

My name is Ben Kelkye and I currently hold the office of President of the Western Maryland Sportsmen's Coalition, Inc. (WMSC) The Coalition is an organization that consists of nearly twenty-six thousand individual members of many sportsmen's clubs of the five western Maryland counties of Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick, and Carroll. We meet regularly with authorized representatives of our members' sporting clubs, their designated county representatives and members of other associations & organizations affiliated with our sport.

Briefly stated, our mission is to provide recognition and publicity for area sportsmen and conservation clubs engaged in wildlife management and/or the preservation of land, water, and open space resources and to provide a forum in which each member organization may present and discuss its local memberships' views on such issues.

Senate Bill 0001 as written, will essentially prohibit any lawful handgun permit holder from being readily able to defend him or herself against deadly physical force in the following places:

Any location licensed to sell or dispense alcohol for on-site consumption which includes most restaurants, a museum a stadium or a location being used for an "organized sporting or athletic activity" where three or more individuals are competing in a sport or athletic activity together as part of the same league. live theater performances or locations being used for musical concerts or performances for which members of the audience are required to pay or possess a ticket to be admitted, and locations being used for fairs or carnivals, and racetracks.

We firmly believe that these restraints on our ability to defend ourselves in places people tend to go are completely unconstitutional. One of the most egregious provisions is the ban on carrying a firearm in any and all places that have a license to serve alcohol onsite. That provision pretty much covers everything from restaurants to bars to many private clubs, including many hotels.

Lastly, and most unfortunately, this very restrictive legislation is cumbersome and confusing. It will most likely affect normal law-abiding citizens by unwittingly engaging in some type of loosely defined criminal activity via a technicality of law with serious penalties. This proposed legislation is over-reaching, very unnecessary, unconstitutional and predictably will be ineffective in keeping people safe from the criminal element of our society.

I, as a private citizen of this State, together with the thousands of club members that are the heart of the Western Maryland Sportsmen's Coalition, Inc. **strongly urge you to oppose SB-0001**, Titled: **Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms- Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)**.

Respectfully,

*Ben Kelkye*

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Signed: Joe Winter, President, Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs  
Jerry Zembower, President, Allegany & Garrett County Sportsmen's Association  
Matt Guilfoyle, President, Carroll County Sportsmen's Association