



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 29th, 2023

SB 01

Criminal Law - Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms - Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)

House Judiciary Committee

Position: Favorable

The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 01 prohibits, with specified exceptions, a person from knowingly wearing, carrying, or transporting a firearm onto the real property of another unless the other has given express permission, either to the person or to the public generally, to wear, carry, or transport a firearm on the real property. In addition, the bill prohibits a person from knowingly wearing, carrying, or transporting a firearm within 100 feet of a place of public accommodation.

The Catholic Church has a strong interest in public safety and keeping communities safe. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states in response to rising violence that “[w]e have an obligation to respond. Violence – in our homes, our schools and streets, our nation and world – is destroying the lives, dignity and hopes of millions of our sisters and brothers.” To that point, the Church supports legislation that controls and strengthens regulations on firearms, and other such legislation that makes our communities safer. When community members are not in fear of their lives, they can live up to their God-given potential and enrich the world around them. Every person has a right to life, and the Conference will continue to work to combat violence and promote a culture of peace.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and respectfully urges a **favorable** report for Senate Bill 01.