

Opposition to HB0824


February 20, 2023

Dear House Judiciary committee members, I am rising to oppose house bill 824. This bill creates an undue burden on applicants seeking a wear and carry permit. The expanded processes in addition to the extensive processes already taken by the Maryland State Police in the course of investigating applicants and determining which are eligible for the permit would double the existing fees of permits to at least \$150 for the initial permit and \$100 for renewal not to mention \$20 for duplicates. Getting a permit is already a costly affair with the average first time applicant spending anywhere between \$500 to \$750 between the training, fingerprinting, and fees for the permit itself.

Government might be able to require licenses for carry permits, but they cannot require fees beyond what it costs to administer the licensing scheme. In addition, since the Bruen decision cost for obtaining a permit in some localities is as high as \$1200, So I've been told. That seems an awful lot of money, time and effort just to exercise the constitutional right of self-preservation and defense.

My understanding today is that there is a revised version of SB0001. That bill also contains enhanced licensing provisions. HB0824 seems to conflict with those new licensing provisions. Any differences between these bills on licensing would have to be reconciled before they could become law.

A final point I wish to bring up: How many certified wear and carry holders have been charged and found guilty of inappropriate and illegal use or procurement of a firearm? And if so, what percentage is that compared to the increased murder rate due to violent behavior with causality being illegal use of firearms due to gang violence or other criminal behavior? It seems this bill wants to "sin tax" the legal wear and carry holder instead of actually reducing crimes with firearms! Thank you very much for your time.


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