

Testimony in opposition of SB1 (Gun Safety Act of 2023)

My name is Stephanie May, I'm a lifelong resident of Maryland, currently living in Hagerstown. I am volunteering to give a very condensed version of my testimony and have not been paid to do so.

On January 6, 1997, I became the victim of gun violence. That evening, just after arriving home from work, the doorbell rang and while I was returning downstairs, a man named Ralph Manna, who, without warning, started shooting through the side glass into the house. I ran back upstairs, while my mother retreated into an adjacent room. Ralph left the property, went to another residence, shot, and killed a beloved neighbor.

From the time that took place, I was scared to death of guns. Just the sound of a gunshot mentally took me back to that night, and I relived the incident all over again. It wasn't until years later that I was able to overcome my fear. I could have just avoided it altogether, instead I confronted my fear and began my journey of learning how to safely operate a gun. I eventually took my handgun safety course and subsequently applied for and received my Concealed Carry license. It is empowering. For me, it is most empowering knowing that I can face a threat, no matter where I am.

The reason I am here today is to remind this panel that, unfortunately, violence is everywhere. Without my constitutionally given right to defend myself, as this bill intends to achieve, it will only empower criminals and those who care less about the rule of law. My testimony also speaks for the hundreds if not thousands of women that this will affect as well. As so many of them cannot be here today, I want my unique testimony to speak on their behalf, and I ask this panel to reconsider passing this bill.

I thank you for allowing me to testify today.