

Desk of: Rebecca Hamilton  
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Dear Judiciary Committee members,

I am writing in **OPPOSITION** of HB0824 as written based on section 5-304.B.2 (fee schedule).

I believe this fee schedule increases the income gap of legal handgun owners, and continues to make it difficult for those who want to protect themselves in low-income, and often more crime ridden, areas to afford to legally own and carry a firearm.

In 2021 I decided I wanted to be able to protect myself – in order to do so, I had to take a course on the MD HQL program that would allow me to legally purchase a handgun in the state. I then had to file my application with MSP, which included paying for fingerprints. I believe at this point I was nearing \$200 out of pocket, and I hadn't even purchased my firearm. I then took a 16-hour course for my wear and carry, again was fingerprinted, and another application filed with MSP. I spent close to \$600 to be able properly permitted in the state of Maryland. Tell me, is it always possible for someone who is living in a high crime area to also shell out that money so that they can legally protect themselves and their loved ones? No, it's not. Yet, we have criminals who purchase and carry illegally.

While you may look at this increase in fees as a way to increase associated revenue, that 200% increase on fees only makes it more difficult for law abiding citizens to follow the legal channels. I expect these increase in fees to be your deterrent to citizens filing for their wear and carry permits.

So you deter citizens from arming themselves to protect themselves, while you allow criminals to run wild.

Shame on you.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Hamilton', written in a cursive style.

Rebecca Hamilton  
Cecil County Council, District 2