

As a constituent of Maryland, I am writing to you today to urge you to oppose Senate Bill 1 (SB1).

The right to keep and bear arms is guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the Constitution. As written, SB1 restricts these rights for citizens of Maryland, may be unconstitutional, and should not be passed. The Supreme Court of the United States has affirmed the right of citizens to wear and carry a gun.

Maryland already has some of the toughest gun laws in the country, but crime rates are on the rise. Areas like Germantown and Gaithersburg where I live are becoming more and more dangerous to law abiding residents. The tough gun control laws are not followed by criminals who engage in aggressive home invasions, armed robberies, carjackings, illegal drug trafficking, and a host of other extreme and violent crimes that occur all too frequently. My next door neighbor found a container in her yard last weekend that contained 5 fentanyl pills and a vial of PCP where our grandchildren play with her grandchildren. If they were to handle these drugs, they may be dead today. The same day we were notified of her discovery, a student experienced what is thought to be an opioid overdose at the local McDonalds. We went to that same location that day before we found out about the incident. Notifications by local residents on the app *Next Door* indicate an increasing frequency of incidents of brazen home invasions, illegal drug activities, and aggravated assaults. The environment creates a high risk to all law-abiding residents to bodily harm, or worse, death. This proposed bill greatly reduces the ability of Maryland residents to protect themselves and their loved ones.

The dangers we are exposed to in our neighborhoods has climbed to an extreme level. The police, while doing the best they can under challenging conditions including reduced staffing levels, are not able to keep up with the rising crime rates and, as a result, are not able to keep all of our citizens and neighborhoods safe. Any new gun control laws would be ignored by criminals like they ignore the existing ones. And law-abiding citizens will be left open to increased risk of bodily harm or worse to lose their lives or the lives of their loved ones. Instead of pursuing unnecessary and ineffective laws such as SB 1, the General Assembly needs to instead find ways to get criminals off the streets and hold them accountable for their illegal actions.

Maryland efforts at gun control do not achieve their intended goal to protect our communities from criminals. Instead, it only disarms law-abiding individuals. More strict gun control laws put me and my family and my friends and neighbors at increased and unacceptable risk. And the environment this has created makes our cities less desirable for new residents and companies who consider investing in our area.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Mark Lombard

Gaithersburg, Maryland