



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the
Judicial Proceedings Committee
on
Senate Bill 324
February 2, 2024
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of public safety. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a faith community with three judicatories across our State.

Our community has stated support for adequate weapons regulation as an essential for public security and safety. Typically, regulation policy for weapons is well below the necessary according to the standard advocated by our community. We have supported many pieces of Maryland legislation to properly register, secure and control weapons.

Senate Bill 324 seeks a regulation by scrutiny of owners' use of handguns. Public accidental discharge of a handgun falls well outside typical rationalizations for carrying weapons in the community; justifications that lean on a right to personal safety and defense. This bill would require an incident of accidental handgun discharge in public to prompt registration for firearms safety course within ninety days, to be completed within six months. Failure to complete a course would result in revocation of a permit.

Senate Bill 324 would be appropriate and legal regulation because competent, responsible handling of weapons is a minimum requirement for keeping the public safe. We implore a favorable report.

Lee Hudson