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WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF KATIE NOVOTNY IN SUPPORT OF SB180  
WITH AMENDMENTS

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January 14, 2025

I am a gun owner, advocate for the right to self-defense, certified range safety officer, and a competitor in firearms competition. I support SB180, but only with amendments.

Since the Bruen decision, the number of carry permits in Maryland has skyrocketed, and rightly so. The Supreme Court affirmed the rights of all law abiding citizens to carry firearms outside the home for the purpose of self-defense. Maryland's current carry permit process allows for a two year permit, plus the time until a persons birthday for the first permit, and then three years after that. This bill leaves that intact EXCEPT for retired police officers, to whom it extends the courtesy of a five year permit. Many former police simply carry under LEOSA and skip the state licensing process altogether, further reducing the effect of this bill.

ALL permit holds should be able to have a five year permit in the state of Maryland, not just a select few. What good reason is there to extend this only to retired police officers? If the reason for shorter permit times is to learn new laws in the classroom, aren't RETIRED police officers in need of the same information? They are no longer active duty, presumably learning new laws through their job. Any reason to extend permit length to retired police, can be applied to ordinary citizens as well.

If the argument is for more frequent background checks, there are methods in place to require permits to be revoked if a person is convicted a crime which makes them ineligible to continue having a carry permit. Maryland participates in the FBI's "Rap Back" system which notifies the MSP when a permit holder is arrested anywhere in the country. Furthermore, it was made a requirement, rather than simply allowed, to revoke a permit when a person is found to have become disqualified. This negates the need for a shorter permit. Extending the time for permit renewals for everyone would also ease the burden on the Maryland State Police Licensing Division caused by the large influx of applicants.

Speaking of burdens, it seems like an unnecessary burden for the MSP to then have to track the different classes of people for permit length. What modifications would need to be performed to the system to allow for this? At what cost and for what benefit? The MSP's time could be better spent on other activities than processing renewals.

Finally, Maryland is in the minority with its short permitting length. Even excluding the majority of states which are now Constitutional Carry (29), requiring no permit at all, most states have at least a five year permit. Our immediate neighbors Pennsylvania and Virginia both have five year permits. Delaware has an initial three year permit and then five year renewals.

Maryland should conform to numerous other states and change the permit renewal time to five years for all residents, saving both applicants and the state time and money.

Because of these reasons above, I request a favorable report with amendments.

Respectfully,

Katie Novotny

District 35A

[Katie.novotny@hotmail.com](mailto:Katie.novotny@hotmail.com)

443-617-7568