



2A Maryland

P.O. Box 8922 • Elkridge, MD 21075

2A@2AMaryland.org

Senate Bill 0585 Criminal Law-Exception to Armed Trespass Prohibition-Retired Law Enforcement Favorable ONLY with AMENDMENTS

While we have great respect and admiration for our law enforcement officers, to create yet another “carve out” on any issue is something we cannot support. This nation was founded upon the concept that all citizens are created equal and thus have equal protection under the law. Retired law enforcement officers already pay nothing for their permits to wear and carry a handgun. Senate Bill 180 widens the gap between the rights granted to private citizens and Senate Bill 585 only exacerbates the inequity.

The term “private citizens” is key. Retired law enforcement officers are exactly that; retired. They have no police or arrest powers whatsoever. Should Senate Bill 180 become law, the interval between training will increase from 3 years to 5 years. This means the retired officers will be less familiar with Maryland’s ever changing gun laws compared to private citizens who are not retired officers. Further, their shooting skills will not be polished and/or evaluated as frequently.

The synergy created by these two Bills amounts to a type of discriminatory class warfare.

Unless Senate Bill 585 is amended to include all law-abiding private citizens, we cannot in good conscience support it as to do so is tantamount to supporting discrimination. We must oppose SB 585 unless it reflects Thomas Jefferson’s statement that “all men are created equal” which appears in the preamble to the United States Declaration of Independence.

John H. Josselyn
2A Maryland
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