

Brady  
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Washington, DC 20002



Testimony of Ramya Swami, Manager, State Policy, Brady  
**Opposition to SB 585 [UNF]**  
Before the Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
February 12, 2025

Dear Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and other distinguished members of the Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Founded in 1974, Brady works across Congress, courts, and communities, uniting gun owners and non-gun owners alike to end America's gun violence epidemic. Our organization today carries the name of Jim Brady, who was shot and severely injured in the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. Jim and his wife, Sarah, led the fight to pass federal legislation requiring background checks for gun sales. Brady continues to uphold Jim and Sarah's legacy by uniting Americans across the country in the fight to prevent gun violence.

Brady applauds the thoughtful work and legislative efforts of this body to prevent and end gun violence throughout the state. Tragically, despite these efforts and some of the strongest gun laws in the nation, each year, 785 Marylanders are killed by gun violence, and 493 of those deaths are from firearm homicides.<sup>1</sup> We need only look at the fact that Maryland has the seventh highest firearm homicide rate in the country to see that gun violence is a crisis in Maryland communities and additional policies must be put in place to prevent further tragedies.

Two years ago, in response to the Supreme Court's decision in *Bruen*, we gathered in this chamber and worked to pass SB 1 – the Firearm Safety Act of 2023 – a bill that updated Maryland's concealed carry permitting system and reasonably updated the locations within the state of Maryland in which one is prohibited from carrying a concealed firearm.

As challenges to the Firearm Safety Act of 2023 make their way through the court system in Maryland, we must allow the judicial branch to do their jobs and not complicate things further for them. By creating an exception to a portion of the law that, due to court challenges, no longer exists, the bill before you today does the *opposite* of that.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. *Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS)* [online]. (2005) [cited 2024 Feb. 2]. Available at: [www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars).

As written, SB 585 would allow retired law enforcement officers from any state or local jurisdiction, to carry concealed weapons on the private property of another even without the consent of the property owner. This allowance does not accurately reflect the current bounds of the law in Maryland because it references a portion of the Firearm Safety Act of 2023 that was overturned by the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland.

Beyond this oversight, passing this bill will only lead to further confusion for all Marylanders, as private property owners will not have the expertise to verify the credentials of every person claiming to be a member of retired law enforcement who enters their land with an unwanted firearm.

Property owners should be able to stop anyone, including retired officers, from bringing unwanted firearms onto their premises. While we honor their service, retired law enforcement officers no longer serve in an official capacity and should be subject to the same private property laws as you and I. There is simply no reason that a retired member of law enforcement who has not been an active member of law enforcement for decades, in some cases, should be above the law. All this will do is create further opportunities for confusion and violence and ultimately harm Marylanders who simply want to enjoy the right to use their private property, free from the threat of gun violence.

For the reasons stated above, we urge an unfavorable report for SB 585.

Sincerely,

Ramya Swami  
State Police Manager  
Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.