

HB0171

My name is Galen Muhammad and I am the Maryland State Director of the United 2A Collective.

I stand in support of this bill with a friendly amendment. That friendly amendment is to extend this bill to ***all*** Maryland concealed carry permit holders. This point of view wasn't even heard by the entire Senate Judiciary Committee because of the rejection of this friendly amendment and extreme limit of witnesses allowed.

It is unfortunate that Senator West would reject our support for his bill (**SB0180**) because it included all Maryland concealed carry permit holders.

On Jan. 16, Sen. West gave testimony that the natural increase in concealed carry permit applications was costly, due to the Bruen Decision. If this is truly a costly process, then extending all validation periods of ***all*** Maryland concealed carry permits would greatly reduce these costs that the senator mentioned in his testimony.

Sen. West also mentioned the training and good standing the retired law enforcement officers have. Most police departments require their officers to qualify with their handgun in a live fire qualification only once or twice a year. Testimony heard for Sen. West's bill also pointed out that some departments could not afford to send their officers to the gun range. As civilian firearms owners and, particularly as firearms instructors, many of us go to the range to shoot 3 – 4 times a month or more and happily absorb that cost. Testimony heard during the 2022 discussion of Senate Bill 1 demonstrated how most frequently training civilians are more accurate at shooting than most police officers. It was a police officer who gave that testimony and mentioned the Indianapolis mall shooting and how a 22 year old concealed carry permit holder saved more lives by neutralizing the active threat from 40 yards away. I know that there **are** statistically 10% of police officers who make it a point to put in that extra time and expense on the range. But many civilian handgun owners are as well trained with their handguns as the police.

There is no **reason** to **not** include **all** concealed carry permit holders with this validation extension period for LEOs. Last year, this legislature voted to **increase** the fees **and** frequency of renewal for the Constitutional right to bear arms while *reducing* the validation period. It would also be right and more appropriate to **increase** the validity period to 5 years *instead* of its currently decreased 2 years.

I ask that this bill, with the **above** suggested friendly amendment, receive a favorable review.