



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Unit
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: March 11, 2026
BILL NUMBER: House Bill 1502 **POSITION:** Oppose
BILL TITLE: Consumer and Display Fireworks – Regulation and Tax

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation seeks to authorize the sale and possession of consumer fireworks. The bill further authorizes the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) an integral part of Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP) to issue permits for the display and sale of consumer fireworks. The OSFM will be required to inspect proposed product and approve sales locations as the bill establishes location criteria.

Under current law, only ground based sparklers are approved for sale to the public. Other commercial fireworks are approved for sale to commercially permitted businesses for displays. These commercial displays are similar to the fireworks launched at celebrations by fire departments, the Inner harbor, etc. The OSFM is responsible for permitting the businesses and the handlers of the fireworks.

One major concern with House Bill 1502 is that the bill requires temporary consumer fireworks stands to comply with NFPA 1124 requirements for consumer fireworks retail sales and storage, but the scope of that code has been significantly narrowed in the 2026 edition. The last edition of this code is 2006. The 2013 code was rescinded. The OSFM becomes responsible for the inspection and licensing of these new business locations. The number of temporary sales locations are expected to increase exponentially statewide.

This legislation also delegates the regulatory authority of defining certain fireworks to the American Pyrotechnic Association by stating “APA 87-1, 2001 and its successor editions. That means APA can change the rules and Maryland (and the OSFM) has to just accept whatever the industry creates.

Fireworks cause serious injuries and deaths every year to those who are not respecting the danger these fireworks can bring. While the OSFM understands people will go to great lengths to purchase fireworks from other states and bring them back to Maryland, we anticipate that should House Bill 1502 pass as written, there will be a greater number of fireworks in our neighborhoods and as such we would expect to see an increase in the number of injuries and/or deaths caused by the fireworks. The greater ease of availability the greater the number of sales and sadly there will be more injuries and/or deaths.

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For these reasons, the Maryland Department of State Police urge the Committee to give House Bill 1502 an unfavorable report.