

Subject: HB1339 - Handgun Roster Reform - OPPOSE

Dear Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Your committee will hear the above bill on Wednesday, February 25.

It is a companion bill to SB830 being heard in the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee on Tuesday, February 24.

The Maryland Handgun Roster Board was created in 1988, within the Maryland Department of State Police, and should be disbanded, not reformed. Its purpose is to compile a list of approved handguns that can be manufactured for sale or distribution within the state. HB1339 would now give this authority to the Maryland Attorney General.

However, the Supreme Court has consistently ruled that arms "in common use" by law-abiding citizens may NOT be prohibited, as described in and protected by the Second Amendment. (One such case that set the precedent was District of Columbia v. Heller.)

HB1339 would establish a government regulation that would limit law-abiding citizens' choice of "common use" firearms that are best suited to their needs for sports, self-defense, or competition. It effectively would ban many handguns "in common use." It would not deter violent criminals from gaining access to any handguns either approved or banned... it only makes "common use" handguns less accessible to law-abiding citizens.

Please understand how this bill will not make our streets any safer. It will not protect us from violent criminals who do not purchase handguns legally. It will require extensive testing by the Maryland State Police or an independent agency and will set a fee schedule to cover the cost of testing. It will make the process of buying a firearm difficult and burdensome on law-abiding citizens, thereby penalizing them for exercising their Second Amendment rights, and doing nothing practical to prevent crime.

Instead of reforming the roster, a bill should be considered to abolish it.

Please give HB1339 an UNFAVORABLE report.

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