

April 8, 2022

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House of Delegates
H-101 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Speaker Jones:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have vetoed House Bill 1021 – *Public Safety – Licensed Firearms Dealers – Security Requirements*.

As you know, I am not opposed to reasonable and balanced measures to improve public safety surrounding firearms and ensure that firearms stay out of the hands of dangerous individuals. As governor, I also review legislation with a lens to identify if the policy will have detrimental impacts on jobs and businesses, particularly small businesses, in Maryland.

There are over 400 businesses in Maryland that have a federal firearms license and are able to engage in the buying and selling of firearms as a business. This legislation would prohibit a licensed firearm dealer from storing firearms on their business' premises outside of business hours unless the building is equipped with video surveillance on the interior and exterior; bars, security screens, commercial grade metal doors, grates, or other physical barriers approved by the Maryland State Police on all exterior doors and windows; a burglar alarm system. Further, the business will need to either install physical barriers to prevent the breach of the building by a vehicle, or lock all firearms in a vault, safe, or building with appropriate physical security barriers. The legislation tries to create a one-size-fits-all policy, and fails to take into account the fact that some of these businesses are not big box stores and may be operated out of one's home, where physical security features may not be able to be installed. Not to mention, the bill gives these business owners less than six months to come into compliance with this burdensome law and assumes that each of these businesses have enough capital to immediately fund these expensive security upgrades.

This legislation was fast-tracked in the Senate, where there was essentially no opportunity for the public to weigh in, and reasonable amendments that would have made the bill more palatable for the industry and stakeholders were essentially ignored and discarded without meaningful consideration. That has resulted in an ill-informed policy that could result in the closure of some small businesses due to a

blatant unwillingness to accommodate firearm dealers and gunsmiths who could reasonably comply with the policy with appropriate flexibilities and parameters.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 1021.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor