



Informational Testimony
Permit to Carry, Wear, or Transport - Required Courses
SB 422

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Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence

February 13, 2020

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence is a local, grassroots organization dedicated to reducing gun deaths and injuries throughout the state of Maryland, with a particular focus on reducing urban gun violence and gun suicide.

We appreciate Senator Young's interest in finding ways to ensure Maryland's wear and carry trainings are providing comprehensive training for individuals with wear and carry permits; however, we do not think requiring more frequent training is necessary, and we are concerned that this bill may have the opposite effect. We often see bills introduced asking that training hours be reduced citing concerns about costs and difficulty for some training programs to fill 16 hours with meaningful curriculum. MPGKV testifies against these bills every year because we believe 16 hours for an initial permit and 8 hours for a renewal permit are appropriate requirements, and we are concerned that if training were required on an annual basis, it would strengthen arguments to decrease the number of required hours. These concerns are not unfounded, in 2017, Delegate Saab introduced legislation (HB891) that would have dramatically reduced the number of training hours from 16 to 6. This legislation passed the Judiciary committee, but was later recommitted.

MPGV recognizes the intent of this legislation is to ensure wear and carry permit holders are receiving appropriate levels of training on a regular basis, and we share in that goal. There are other policies the committee could examine such as requiring Maryland State Police to conduct random audits of training courses to ensure instructors are covering all required material, and/or requiring a certain number of hours to be spent at a range participating in live action fire. MPGKV would be happy to discuss these and other policy options with the sponsor or committee during the interim.

Thank you to the committee for your time. We recommend the committee take no action on SB422.