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*Written Testimony of Katie Novotny in Opposition of HB1257*

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February 26, 2020

I am a member of Multiple Gun Rights organizations. Maryland Shall Issue, Associated Gun Clubs, Maryland State Rifle and Pistol Association, and the National Rifle Association. I am a certified Range Safety Officer with the NRA. I compete in multiple shooting events such as Steel Challenge, 3-gun, small bore, and vintage military rifle matches. I am an avid firearms collector. I oppose HB1257.

This bill is seeking to punish business owners, for the crimes committed by brazen criminals. The draconian requirements required by this bill are unnecessary and punitive. There isn't much stopping someone who is willing to get together a group of individuals, steal multiple cars, and then use those to ram through the front of a building in order to gain access.

The liability insurance requirement for dealers for acts of another using a firearm sold, rented, or transferred is especially egregious. Any firearm sold by an FFL, long gun or handgun, will have had a background check performed on the purchaser. Either through the NICS for a long gun, or through the Maryland State Police for a handgun. These agencies are advising of a "proceed" or "not disapproved" on these background checks. The FFL is simply providing the information on the FF4473 or the 77r to the appropriate agencies, as supplied by the purchaser. The FFL is not performing the background check. A background check is simply a snapshot in time. It is not an indicator of future behavior. If an FFL has suspicions about a sale, they already have the right to refuse a sale. They do this on a regular basis. Holding a FFL responsible for the future actions of another, simply because of a business transaction is absurd. Are we going to hold car dealerships to the same standard?

Another unnecessary part of this bill is the requirement that any firearm that is displayed to a customer being rendered inoperable. An unloaded firearm does not present a safety hazard. As a customer myself, this is unacceptable. I must be allowed to work the action to check for operation, as well as work the trigger to get a feel for the trigger pull. This is particularly important when inspecting used firearms. There is no safety reason to require this.

Because of these reasons above, I request an unfavorable report.

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