

## John P. Finnessy

3526 Angus Valley Trail | Ellicott City, MD 21042

### WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF JOHN P. FINNESSY, PRESIDENT OF FORTRESS TRAINING, IN SUPPORT OF HB1502

I am President of Fortress Training, a leader in the firearms training and safety arena. We have helped over 1,500 citizens work through the burdensome regulatory requirements of obtaining a Maryland Wear and Carry. I am a certified Maryland State Police handgun instructor and credentialed as an instructor by over a dozen other state and law enforcement agencies. I am an instructor in five modalities of the National Rifle Association and a professional handgun instructor through Glock. We have trained almost 10,000 Maryland citizens since the inception of the Firearms Safety Act of 2013.

Every jurisdiction that touches our state allow their citizens to freely carry with little or no training. As a matter of fact, West Virginia does not require a citizen to even apply to a government agency to a carry a firearm. However, Maryland not only leads the way in government restrictions and oversight, but as a result the citizens are vulnerable and lead the mid-Atlantic in murders and violent crime. Think of that, we have the most restrictive law and we are the deadliest state, and in it, one of the deadliest cities in the United States.

#### **Twelve used guns, three killed**

We are aware of twelve of our students we know have used guns; nine used them as tools to deescalate and extract, three used it to defend their lives. Two of the three killed the assailant who was trying to use deadly force against them. If it were not for the firearm, all three would probably be a deceased. The question is, how many citizens have been and will be killed because they have no way to protect themselves, unlike every citizen in every jurisdiction that touches our state.

HB1502 will expand the citizens right for selected individuals. Without question these individuals face incredible danger as a public servant while off-duty. We have sold dozens of Tasers to doctors and nurses who fear for their lives every day while they walk to their car or are outside the medical care facility where they are employed. They cannot protect their lives after being threatened by a family member who just lost a love one who may have been under their care. The one we hear over and over again who face continual threats are firefighters/EMS personal. These are America's hero's and we deny them the ability to protect their life. How dangerous is their job? Command demands they do not wear their uniform because they could be targeted. I could fill a page with stories of direct threats to the lives of these professionals.

I believe shortly the United State Supreme Court will fix the wrong of this body and lift the burden legislators of Maryland put on the very citizens they serve. Until than, there is no reason you as a body, should continue allowing innocent bodies of honorable citizens to pile up in your arms. I ask you to allow the aforementioned public servants listed in this bill, who face threats on a daily basis, to be able to protect themselves if faced with deadly force.

I ask you to support HB1502

Sincerely,

John P. Finnessy