



March 10, 2021

State of Maryland

**Maryland
Institute for
Emergency Medical
Services Systems**

653 West Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland
21201-1536

*Larry Hogan
Governor*

*Clay B. Stamp, NRP
Chairman
Emergency Medical
Services Board*

*Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director*

*410-706-5074
FAX 410-706-4768*

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
Chairman, Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB 826-Handgun Permits-Qualifications-High Risk Occupations

Dear Chairman Smith,

I would like to provide you and the committee information as you consider SB 0826-Handgun Permits-Qualifications-High Risk Occupations. As drafted, the bill would require the Secretary of the State Police to issue a permit to carry, wear, or transport a handgun to certain individuals who meet certain requirements including completion of a firearms training course approved by the Secretary of State Police, and who are employed in certain professions including but not limited to Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Rescue Squad Members.

As you may know, the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) is an independent state agency responsible for the coordination of emergency medical services in Maryland. MIEMSS is governed by the State EMS Board comprised of members appointed by the Governor.

MIEMSS has significant concerns of the unintended consequences of SB 826. Standards of care for dealing with violent patients do not include the use of firearms or deadly force. EMS clinicians or their agencies may be found negligent or liable if they harm a patient, clinician, or bystander. Additionally, there is the concern that an EMS clinician's weapon could be taken and used against the clinician.

MIEMSS advocates for the use of scientific, evidence-based strategies when making policies for EMS in Maryland. Data shows that because assaults to EMS clinicians are occurring nationally, a number of methods to protect EMS clinicians, including handguns, have been employed, but none have been shown to reduce the risk for EMS clinicians; there have been no evidence-based approaches to the problem. <https://www.jems.com/2019/10/08/protecting-ems-personnel-from-assault/>

I hope you will find this information useful as you consider SB 826. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director, MIEMSS

Cc: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee