



February 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*

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Delegate Luke Clippinger  
Chairman, Judiciary Committee  
House Office Building, Room 101  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: HB 0538-Handgun Permits-Qualifications-High Risk Occupations

Dear Chairman Clippinger,

I would like to provide you and the committee information as you consider HB 0538-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 serious concerns of the unintended consequences of HB 0538. Standards of care for dealing with violent patients do not include the use of firearms or deadly force. EMS providers or their agencies may be found negligent or liable if they harm a patient, provider, or bystander. Additionally, there is the concern that an EMS provider's weapon could be taken and used against the provider.

MIEMSS advocates for the use of scientific, evidence-based strategies when making policies for EMS in Maryland. Data shows that because assaults to EMS providers are occurring nationally, a number of methods to protect EMS providers including handguns, have been employed, but none have been shown to reduce the risk for EMS providers; 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 HB 0538. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

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

Cc: Delegate Wayne Hartman  
Members of the Judiciary Committee