

HB1291 Written Testimony - UNFAVORABLE

I am a 34 year old criminal defense and civil rights attorney and have been a resident in Montgomery County, Maryland, for more than eight (8) years. I am also a progressive democrat who owns firearms.

Viewing this bill in the most favorable light, it is aimed at preventing prohibited persons from purchasing unregulated 80% receivers and finishing those receivers into complete and operable firearms without ever being subjected to a background check.

My concern with this bill is the fact that it does NOT include a grandfather clause likely HB638. Individuals who lawfully purchased 80% receivers and completed them into operable firearms should be given an avenue to keep those firearms through some reasonable process. In addition, HB638's proposed requirements for an individual to manufacture their own firearms subsequent to January 1, 2022, is a much more reasonable approach than an all out ban.

I am also concerned that this bill would also be so broad as to include black powder replicas of antique firearms. There is simply no reason to restrict collectors from obtaining these replicas as I am not aware of any indication that they are used in crime or in any way contribute to gun violence.

If this body is trying to pass gun laws that are common sense then HB1291 does not fit that bill, as it will disproportionately punish lawful gun owners who purchased and completed 80% receivers prior to the enactment of this bill. I implore this body to withdraw HB1291 and focus on other pressing issues that Maryland residents face, such as fixing our broken unemployment system, promoting economic opportunities to low income communities, making mental health care more affordable and accessible to Maryland residents and continuing to address the public health and economic issues created by COVID-19.

Thank you for your time and for hearing and considering my concerns.

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