

Feb. 2021  
Testimony RE: HB0638/SB0624  
Untraceable and Undetectable firearms

Position: OPPOSE

HB0638/SB0624 Restricts the individual from making a “homemade” firearm. Also make possession of undetectable or “covert” firearms.

There is no such thing as an undetectable firearm that can function reliably without blowing up in the shooter’s hand. There are as yet no non-metallic materials that can withstand the heat and pressure of the explosive discharge of the shell. Even carbon fiber barrels used in some .22 caliber rifles have a steel liner.

“Covert” firearms are in the realm of curiosities and spycraft. Again, please define the problem. At worst this class should be treated as concealed and fall under existing of concealed carry laws. Seriously, what is the difference in between a concealed firearm and a covert firearm (which is concealed in plain view), other than appearance and that “covert” firearms are less functionally capable (fewer rounds, usually a single shot, inaccurate, very close range only)

Home gunmaking has been a tradition since the beginning of this country. It allows craftsmen to create not only a functional tool but one that reflects the aesthetics and ergonomics of the maker. Homemade firearms are already restricted by the federal government and are for the use of the maker. Transfer is limited, and commercial production is restricted.

So called “ghost” guns are seldom used in crime. And when they are, that use is associated with numerous other crimes already on the books, such as distribution outside of the family of multiple units to known criminals, who are usually associated with the maker. Criminal can illegally obtain more reliable firearms at less cost than manufacturing their own, The world as shown on TV in shows such as SWAT, FBI, etc inflame emotions but do not even come close to depicting reality and are based on a fallacious scenario to set up dramatic conflict for entertainment. A serial number only traces the firearm to the first buyer. Since the VAST majority of firearms used in violent crimes (other than domestic crimes of passion where the perpetrator is known) are committed using illegally obtained firearms, a serial number is of marginal use in solving the crime.

Then of course there is the fear that the Government or another entity will access the data base and use it to confiscate firearms, target gun owners, or identify potential targets for theft . The solar wind computer hack by Russia is an example of what can happen. We have not even begun to ascertain how many government and private companies networks have been infiltrated and malicious virus’ implanted. Just because one is paranoid doesn’t mean there is not a reason for it. And there is plenty of historical precedent.

Please encourage the use of laws already on the books before you deny me the pleasure of creating a family heirloom that can be used and passed down for generations. “I just harvested a deer with the rifle Grampa built and gave to Dad”

My suggestion, instead of focusing on doubling down with ever more restrictive firearms limitations, which obviously have not worked to look for a new approach. (Look at FSA13. Violent crime was on the decrease for many years prior to 2013 in Maryland. But almost immediately (within a year) POOF! Murders in Baltimore soared to historically high rates and have remained well over 300 annually and are on pace for the same in 2021 in spite of FSA 13 and the firearm control measures passed each subsequent year).

That new approach will include holding criminals responsible. Stop our revolving door justice system. Mandatory sentencing. The BPD has not recovered a single firearm used in a violent crime that legally obtained. Do this in conjunction with measures to return family values. To make parents take responsibility. Clean up the drug problem. The VAST majority of homicides in Maryland are drug related.

Establish firearms safety education in elementary school. The NRA “Eddie Eagle” program could be a model. Teach the children firearm safety, what to do if they find a firearm, and what not to do. A program that neither promotes firearms nor instills the unreasonable, almost hysterical fear so many people exhibit when faced with or discussing firearms, but one that imparts safe practices and demystifying knowledge at an age early enough to be effective.

Other measures with some impact: Tax credit, tax deduction, sales tax forgiveness for purchase of approved firearms safes (even though every firearms safe “could” be broken into, and therefore no firearms safe could not be approved under this law..see where I am going with this? Which course do you think will be more effective?

Please be responsible legislators. Do not just skim the surface, but look deeper. Find the root causes of whatever problems you are trying to solve. Decide on how you would measure effectiveness. Then craft a plan to achieve that. HINT: if it has not worked in the past, esp. when the problem we want to solve gets worse, maybe we are barking up the wrong tree.

I urge an unfavorable finding for this bill

Very Respectfully,  
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