



State of Maryland

**Maryland
Institute for
Emergency Medical
Services Systems**

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February 14, 2022

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

Re: HB 676 – Handgun Permits – Qualifications – High Risk Occupations

Dear Chairman Clippinger,

I would like to provide you and the Committee information as you consider HB 676 – 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 an 11-member State EMS Board appointed by the Governor.

MIEMSS has significant concerns of the unintended consequences of HB 676.

EMS 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 an EMS Clinician harms a patient, provider, 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 providers are occurring nationally, a number of methods to protect EMS providers have been employed, including handguns, but none have been shown to reduce the risk for EMS providers. To date, there have been no evidence-based approaches developed to address the problem. <https://www.jems.com/2019/10/08/protecting-ems-personnel-from-assault/>

I hope you and the Committee find this information useful as you consider HB 676. Please feel free to contact me if I may provide any further information.

Sincerely,


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

Cc: Delegate Wayne Hartman
Members of the Judiciary Committee