

Daniel J. Carlin-Weber
HB871- Handgun Permit - Preliminary Approval
Favorable
3/9/2022

I am a firearms instructor and advocate of responsible firearms handling and ownership. Currently, I am a Maryland State Police Qualified Handgun Instructor, a Utah Concealed Firearm Permit Instructor, USCCA Concealed Carry and Home Defense Instructor, NRA Range Safety Officer, and Basic Pistol Instructor. Since 2016, I have instructed Marylanders from all walks of life on how to safely operate firearms and the responsibilities that come with them. I come before you today to urge a favorable report of House Bill 871.

Currently, the application process for a Maryland Wear and Carry Permit requires that an applicant complete a 16-hour training course BEFORE submitting their application to the Maryland State Police. As you may know, Maryland law demands that many factors be satisfied before they're issued a permit, such as having a "good and substantial reason" for issuance and that they're not prohibited by state or federal law from possessing firearms, among (many) other things. Applicants pay a non-refundable \$75 fee to the State Police to apply and must be Livescan fingerprinted, which usually costs around \$55. Instructors typically charge \$300 or more for the two-day training class with range access and availability sometimes being booked many weeks or even months out. The status quo in Maryland is that one can pay for a course, all the materials and equipment necessary for it, and take two full days of training only to apply for a permit they will likely be denied if *they aren't already certain they'd be approved*. That's roughly \$500 and a lot of time spent for little more than perhaps the friends they made along the way.

Moving the training requirement to after the State Police have otherwise approved an applicant is substantially fairer and wouldn't compromise the State Police's ability to vet applicants. An investigation and all other requirements would still need to be fulfilled *before* one could be approved for the permit. *Then* the onus is on the applicant to satisfy the training requirements. After they provide proof of completion, *only then* would the State Police physically grant the permit. Under no circumstances is someone given a carry permit without the training requirements being met if this bill were to become law.

Despite modeling most of their concealed carry laws after Maryland's, The District of Columbia has offered preliminary approval from the very start of their carry permitting system. Applicants have 45 days to complete training after the Metropolitan Police have investigated and have otherwise given approval. See more about D.C.'s application process here: <https://bit.ly/3ARE4Ot>. Since 2017, the District has issued carry permits to all applicants who complete their training requirements and pass their background checks. It has maintained preliminary approval despite no longer having a 'good cause' requirement for permit issuance like Maryland currently does. Marylanders deserve an equally reasonable, hospitable, and respectful government as D.C. is to its applicants.

It should be noted that the Office of the Attorney General submitted testimony against the Senate cross file of this bill, SB338, seemingly without understanding what the bill does as explained above. <https://bit.ly/34m2LqI>. The members of the Senate did not make the same error and chose to again move this bill unanimously, 45-0. <https://bit.ly/3IJzipw>. Preliminary approval is *fair* and respects the time and finances of each applicant and in no way threatens public safety.

I urge a favorable report.

Daniel J. Carlin-Weber
225 N Calvert St
Baltimore, MD 21202
410-929-1749
dcw@cwdef.com