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SB86 – Rifles and Shotguns – Possession – Age Requirement  
Unfavorable

I am a defense contractor whose current and prior employers include one of the top research laboratories in the United States and one of the leading aerospace corporations in the world. In my spare time I enjoy shooting sports, volunteering in the community, watchmaking, and woodworking. I write in opposition to SB86, a bill that would place many adults between the ages of 18-20 in a predicament of not being able to continue to possess the rifles and shotguns they already own.

The wording of the bill would criminalize the continued ownership of a rifle or shotgun that a Maryland resident between the ages of 18-20 already owned before this bill goes into effect. They would be faced with either legally transferring a firearm to a third party (needing to go through a gun store and pay a heavy transfer fee) or to sell their rifle or shotgun at a loss to whatever gun store may be willing to buy it. The end result would be stripping adults under the age of 21 of their self defense rights as well as the ability to hunt, competitively shoot in events, or practice their skills for recreation.

Similarly, this bill exempts very few circumstances where a person under 21 may be in possession of a rifle or shotgun. One of them being the temporary possession when a person is “1. PARTICIPATING IN MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING OF A 3 RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION; AND 2. UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A QUALIFIED 5 INSTRUCTOR.” This exemption makes no consideration for a parent and their adult child going target shooting for recreation, shooting in a competition, hunting, or even any formal or informal training without a “qualified instructor.” This bill also does not outline who a “qualified instructor” is. Is it one who holds a certification as an instructor by Maryland State Police? Or could it be an instructor from a nationally recognized group such as the National Sport Shooting Association?

This bill would eviscerate sport shooting and the development of valuable firearm safety skills for anyone under the age of 21 save for very few exemptions. I know that if this bill was in effect when I was first learning gun safety and target shooting, I'd be at a great disadvantage to learn and gain practical experience. Similarly, I would not have been able to participate in any competitions or even keep my skills up to be competitive in the first place. A large number of students and athletes' scholarships even depend on shooting ability. There are national scholarships for sport shooting as

well as for sports like biathlon. This bill would deny those athletes the ability to compete with students in other states.

For these reasons, I must urge you give an unfavorable report to this bill. If it were enacted into law, the State would be barring a subset of adults from exercising a right, continuing to possess firearms they already own, and enjoying any shooting sports or hunting.

Sincerely yours,



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