



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the  
**Judiciary Committee**  
on  
**House Bill 546**  
February 21, 2024  
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of public safety. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a faith community with three judicatories across our State.

Our community has stated support for adequate weapons regulation as an essential for public security and safety. Typically, regulation policy for weapons is well below the necessary according to the standard advocated by our community. We have supported many pieces of Maryland legislation to properly register, secure and control weapons.

**House Bill 546** seeks a regulation by scrutiny of owners' use of handguns. Public accidental discharge of a handgun falls well outside typical rationalizations for carrying weapons in the community; justifications that lean on a right to personal safety and defense. This bill would require an incident of accidental handgun discharge in public to prompt registration for firearms safety course within ninety days, to be completed within six months. Failure to complete a course would result in revocation of a permit.

**House Bill 546** would be appropriate and legal regulation because competent, responsible handling of weapons is a minimum requirement for keeping the public safe. We implore a favorable report.

Lee Hudson