

Hello, and thank you for your time.

I am a resident of Union County and I am strongly in opposition of SB 554. During the meeting, many in opposition expressed great points. For example: Criminals don't follow any laws implemented; Legal, concealed carry permit holders are not the problem (there are no supported cases where said permit holders have ever been a part of any gun violence issue); This bill only damages the most law-abiding citizens and their freedoms; Gun-free zones are known "soft targets"; We are our own first responders.

As we currently see with federal buildings, with the exception of Post Offices, there are metal detectors and armed security on site. Those of us who legally carry concealed handguns have no problem with this... because it works for everyone's safety. If you want to remove the need for citizens to carry handguns in public buildings, then you must create "hard targets". These must include, at least, armed security and metal detectors.

One of my bigger concerns is not this bill alone, but the opening of the door for abuse in the future. Ultimately, I believe this bill will allow "pop up" sites to enact this bill without notice, and restrict the movement in public of again... law abiding citizens, who only wish to keep themselves and their families safe whilst roaming outdoors, and instantly turn them in to -in legislators eyes- criminals.

Many of the supporters of the bill who attended the meeting to testify, a majority of which were members of a certain organization, are already opposed to the idea of the general public owning firearms. Any idea that a law on the books, and a picture in the window, will actually deter criminals from acting out their evil intent is disingenuous and is only adding to the problem. The same could be said about any object to be used as a weapon with intent to do bodily harm. The problem is not with the weapon(s) of choice, rather, the individual(s) intent on doing harm with said weapon(s). Legal, concealed carry permit holders statistically do not fit in to this category of individuals.

If you want to fortify the castle, you need to secure the gates. While posters and notices of good intention and persuasion may create a feeling of safety, it far from guarantees it.

Thank you.