

My name is Ed Tucker and I'm submitting this letter in opposition to the bill proposing to prohibit firearms on or within 100 yards of county owned or operated properties.

I am speaking to you as a long time county resident who does have a valid, current, handgun permit issued by the State of Maryland and firmly feel that your proposal is a violation of my constitutional rights.

It should go without saying that by passing this bill you are not making county properties safer, that you are making them less safe. The criminal aspect that may be seeking to do harm on or around these properties does not care if you prohibit weapons – they are going to do what they do either way – this law will not deter them in any way, shape, or form.

The unwritten implications of this bill are far reaching. For example, under prohibited conduct it states that *“no person, to include holders of any state issued permit to carry a concealed firearm, may at any time be in the possession of a weapon or firearm within 100 yards of a building owned or operated by Charles County Government or the Board of Charles County Commissioners.”* If passed as written, this will create multiple complications. How, you ask? Let me give you a couple of examples:

1. Holders of State issued permits occasionally finds themselves at a location or business that prohibits them from carrying their firearm on their person while conducting business at that location. In those instances, their firearm is secured in a proper, legal manner in their vehicle while parked at that location.
 - a. Your 100 yard prohibition will negate that ability to secure their weapon in their vehicle while parked in the County owned parking lot, preventing them from doing business with their local government or elected officials – in essence you are banning these law abiding citizens from accessing

their government's services – services paid for by their tax dollars.

- b. A building owned or operated by Charles County.... 100 yards.... Equals 300 feet... the average length of a car is around 15 feet (according to google). So in comparison, a person can not be in possession of a weapon or firearm within 20 car lengths of any building owned or operated by Charles County.
 - i. Doesn't Charles County own multiple houses and properties around the County in residential areas from tax sales or other means? As written, wouldn't this bill prohibit people living next door to these properties from possessing a weapon or firearm? While on property that that person owns?
 - ii. Doesn't Charles County lease properties for government operations like the emergency medical services offices on Chesapeake Street? As written, wouldn't this bill prohibit anyone with a State issued permit from legally being in possession of their gun while patronizing any of the other businesses in that area? 100 yards, 300 feet, 20 car lengths, no matter how you say it, it's a LONG distance. Especially in a strip mall such as this. There are many other examples of properties like this – the capital clubhouse, rec centers etc...
 - iii. 100 yards is the length of a football field. Your proposal will give you control of all the properties around the County owned or leased property within the scope of a football field – when those properties are not yours to control. That is not within your rights or the scope of your position.

Those are just a couple of examples of how this bill would violate a citizen's rights to legally carry a concealed firearm – even while that citizen is on their own property

Let's take a moment and look at the "Exceptions" listed in the proposal:

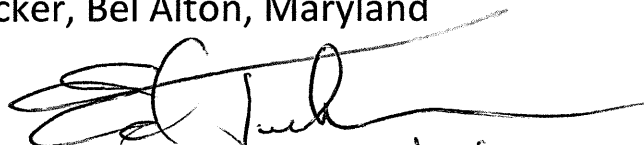
1. Exception: "An active sworn law enforcement officer"

a. While I absolutely agree that an active LEO should be exempted, I would suggest that you are disrespecting the multitude of retired law enforcement officers that continue to legally carry. They've likely made some enemies during their careers; do you honestly not trust them to legally carry to protect themselves (and you) while on or around County properties?

b. Here's a big one for me... Exception: "A member of the Board of Charles County Commissioners" To me, by exempting yourselves from this proposal you are saying "I'm much more responsible than my constituents, I can be trusted where I can't trust them." "I'm special and shouldn't have to follow the laws I pass". I suggest that you are not any more responsible or special than the law abiding citizens who elected you to your position as a County Commissioner.

In conclusion, as stated, I am strongly opposed to this proposed legislation that arguably violates my constitutional rights and urge you, my elected officials, to abandon moving forward with it.

Respectfully submitted by Charles County resident
Ed Tucker, Bel Alton, Maryland



1/3/23