

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 583
Judiciary

(Delegate Smigiel, *et al.*)

Handgun Safety Devices - Repeal

This bill repeals the prohibition against a dealer selling, offering for sale, renting, or transferring handguns in the State unless equipped with an external safety lock or an integrated mechanical safety device. The bill also repeals related requirements pertaining to duties of the Handgun Roster Board to review and report on the status of personalized handgun technology.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. While this bill would likely cause some reorganization of trooper and civilian staff responsibilities within the Department of State Police, it would not result in any general or special fund savings to either personnel costs or other operating expenses.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful. While this bill could spur additional handgun sales in the State, the extent of such an increase cannot be readily quantified. It is assumed that, for some dealers, such a market impact could be significant.

Analysis

Current Law: A licensed firearms dealer is prohibited from selling or transferring in the State a handgun, made on or before December 31, 2002, without an external safety lock. Beginning January 1, 2003, a dealer may not sell or transfer any handgun made after December 31, 2002 unless it has an integrated mechanical safety device. (This provision

does not apply to sales to the government, military, or law enforcement, or sales or transfers by licensed dealers or manufacturers to lawful out-of-state customers.)

An integrated mechanical safety device is a disabling or locking device that is built into a handgun and designed to prevent the handgun from being discharged unless the device has been deactivated.

The Handgun Roster Board is an entity within the Department of State Police. The board is required to review the status of personalized handgun technology and report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly on an annual basis, beginning by July 1, 2002.

A personalized handgun is a handgun manufactured with incorporated design technology that allows the handgun to be fired only by the authorized user and prevents any of the safety characteristics of the handgun from being readily deactivated.

These provisions were contained in Chapter 2 of 2000, the Responsible Gun Safety Act of 2000.

Background: As of February 20, 2003, the following handgun locking devices had been approved by the Handgun Roster Board:

- Cimarron-Aldo Uberti System for SAA;
- Ghost, Inc. (for Glocks only);
- Glock's Lock;
- Heckler & Koch System;
- Saf-T-Trigger by Saf-T-Hammer;
- Smith & Wesson Lock;
- Springfield Armory, Integral Locking System;
- Strahan Firing Pin Lock;
- Swiss Safety by Aldo Uberti;
- Taurus Systems, separate systems for revolvers and semi-automatics; and
- Walther P22.

With respect to personalized handgun technology, according to the board's most recent report (July 1, 2002), the board "concludes that while extensive research has been conducted in the area of personalized weapons, currently there are no models of personalized handguns available for sale. Based on its research, the technology to

produce personalized weapons is between two and ten years away. The Board will continue to evaluate the status of personalized handgun technology and report its findings each year to the Governor and the General Assembly of Maryland.”

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 11, 2003
mam/cer

Analysis by: Guy G. Cherry

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510