

Testimony in support of Bill 21-22

Prohibiting firearms in or Near Places of Public Assembly

Good afternoon. My name is Mindy Landau, I am a resident of Potomac, MD in Montgomery County and I've lived and worked here as a federal employee, now retired, for 40 years. I am a co-lead of Brady United's Montgomery County Chapter and also represent Brady Maryland and our state executive committee. Thank you to the Montgomery County Council for giving me this opportunity to testify.

Bill 21-22 will protect Montgomery County residents from an armed threats to our citizens in places where they work, play and socialize. Our children should not have to fear that someone with a gun will invade their "safe" space for learning. Government workers and concertgoers should be able to go to work, concerts and parks without worrying whether the person next to them is carrying a gun. Our citizens don't want to feel anxious, intimidated, or afraid. We just want to be free and feel safe in the places we visit that give us joy. The presence of guns at or around these public places poses a danger to citizens' emotional and physical well-being. We must protect the citizens of this county and their ability to visit places of worship and parks freely and without fear of being shot.

Let's call it what it is - guns in public places represent armed threats, clear and simple. And intimidation is not what Montgomery County is about. This is why Brady United Against Gun Violence appreciates and strongly supports Council President Albornoz' bill.

By prohibiting firearms within 100 feet of a gathering place, this bill will help to ensure we are protecting the sacred right to assemble for our generation, and generations to come.

Although we respect the Second Amendment and rights of gun owners under the constitution and laws of Maryland, that right must be exercised so as not to infringe on constitutional rights of others, including the right to assemble peacefully. Gun laws are designed to do more than to protect physical safety alone. They can and do help preserve public order and the freedom of others to peaceably assemble, speak, and worship without fear and intimidation.

As a country, much work has been done over the last 100 years to ensure that freedoms, as represented by the right to assemble peacefully, is accessible by all - regardless of their race, socioeconomic class or disability. We must continue this work today. Thank you.