



Testimony of Montgomery County Young Democrats in Support of Expedited Bill 21-22–Weapons–Firearms In or Near Places of Public Assembly

July 25, 2022

Members of the County Council:

The Montgomery County Young Democrats strongly support Councilmember Alborno's [Bill 21-22](#), which would ban the possession of guns in or near places of public assembly, with a few exceptions. It would also remove an exemption that allows certain people with permits to have guns within one hundred yards of these places. Gun violence is a major problem in our county and country, resulting in tens of thousands of deaths every year, and residents should not live in fear when they are out in public. This proposal will tighten restrictions on guns and help ensure that people can participate in public life without being intimidated.

Currently Maryland law allows people with wear-and-carry permits to possess guns when they are within one hundred yards of or in parks, churches, schools, public buildings, and other places of public assembly. This bill bans people from selling, transferring, possessing, or transporting guns in those areas. It includes reasonable exemptions for police officers or security guards, business owners, residents who live within 100 yards of a place of public assembly, and instructors for firearm safety and use.

In order for people to thrive in Montgomery County and engage in its civic and commercial life, they should feel welcome and not be subject to menacing threats. The goal of this bill is to promote public safety and ease of mind. We want to minimize concerns and worries that people have about people carrying weapons in and around these places. People should be able to go to school, their places of worship, the mall, or

community centers without having to constantly look over their shoulder and worry about shooters.

Recently we have seen a troubling trend of people showing up with openly carried weapons outside polling places and other locations; these are blatant attempts to intimidate people, discouraging them from voting and exercising their other political rights. And various authoritarian groups have shown up to various events, most notably Drag Queen Story Hour, and tried to disrupt them.

Bill 21-22 would help reduce acts of violence in county public spaces, counter attempts to intimidate people, and keep people safer. MCYD urges the County Council to vote yes on this bill.

Sincerely,

The Montgomery County Young Democrats