

This bill authorizes the Maryland Transportation Authority to establish a security force to "preserve and protect the public peace, health and safety" with respect to the several facilities and property under the control of the Authority. For these purposes, the members of this force "shall have the same powers as sheriffs, constables, police officers and peace officers in their respective jurisdictions."

The broad powers granted members of the Maryland Transportation Authority security force by House Bill 1592 would include the authority to carry handguns without having to obtain permits. Under the Maryland Handgun Law, members of special police or security forces are required to obtain permits in order to carry handguns. This is in contrast to regular law enforcement personnel, such as sheriffs, constables, police officers, and peace officers, who are excepted from the permit requirements of handgun law.

The Maryland Transportation Authority security force is clearly a special police force. However, House Bill 1592 gives the members of this special police force the same power as regular law enforcement personnel. The effect of such a broad grant of power is to except this special security force from the handgun permit requirements imposed on other special police or security units. Such a result is contrary to the intent and purpose of the Maryland Handgun Law.

Therefore, I have decided to veto House Bill 1592.

Sincerely,

/s/ Marvin Mandel
Governor
