BY adding to

    Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments
    Section 36B(c)(5) and 447A, the latter to be under the
        new subheading "Pistols"
    Annotated Code of Maryland
    (1976 Replacement Volume and 1980 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, The United States Coast Guard has recently
promulgated regulations requiring the carrying of visual
distress signals on all recreational boats in coastal waters
which, as defined, include most of the Chesapeake Bay and
its major tributaries; and

WHEREAS, Several of the items on the approved list of
visual distress signals are devices which would appear to be
handguns under current Maryland law; and

WHEREAS, If these devices are handguns, stringent
requirements apply to the sale of the devices, and permits
are required for the carrying of these devices in Maryland;
and

WHEREAS, These requirements could cause individuals to
select devices from the Coast Guard list that are much less
effective as distress signals than those items which may be
handguns, with the possible result that boating safety as a
whole in Maryland waters will suffer accordingly; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly does not believe that
these devices are likely to be used in violent crimes in the
State; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of this Bill is to expressly
exempt approved visual distress signals from the provisions
of State law on the sale or transfer of pistols and
revolvers, and to provide an exemption from the handgun
permit requirements when these devices are employed on
Maryland waters for their intended purpose, so as to allow
free use of these devices on Maryland waters, and to
therefore provide for the maximum available protection of
the health and safety of Maryland boaters; now, therefore

SECTION 1.   BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
MARYLAND, That section(s) of the Annotated Code of Maryland
be repealed, amended, or enacted to read as follows:

Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments

36B.

(c) (5) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL PREVENT A PERSON
FROM W̶E̶A̶R̶I̶N̶G̶ₜ CARRYINGₜ OR TRANSPORTING ANY SIGNAL PISTOL OR