

“Heading”

“Salutation”

My name is Vincent Leonard Maida Jr. I am 27-year resident of Anne Arundel County and a lifelong hunter, shooter, and firearms advocate. I am grateful for the opportunity to address this hearing, and I hope it will be useful to hear from me on the issue of the Special Exception sought by D & J Enterprises.

I have been around firearms all my life and they continue to occupy a large part of my professional and personal life. I served 22 years in the US Marine Corps (Enlisted/Officer) in conventional and special operations, and executive protection where I carried Rifle and Pistol Expert designations.

I followed that with 22 years in the Department of Defense as an operations officer and executive. In my career I made multiple deployments to support US interests abroad where I was required to carry firearms.

Additionally, I served in contracted training and executive protection roles as a civilian operating with and teaching civilian, government, and military personnel.

I also hold the following ratings/positions:

- Principal, In My Defense, LLC
- Certified Instructor - United States Concealed Carry Association
- Maryland Certified Handgun Instructor
- NRA Range Safety Officer
- Chief, Range Safety Officer for the Anne Arundel Fish and Game Association
- Maryland State Leader for the Faith Based Security Network
- Safety and Security Director for Bay Area Community Church, Annapolis.

I am writing to express my strong support of the D & J Enterprises Special Exception application.

As someone committed to quality firearms and personal protection training, I see the challenges and regularly experience the difficulty presented by our acute shortage of training facilities. Anne Arundel County's and Maryland's firearms owners/users are increasing faster than the facilities needed to ensure the appropriate quality, volume, and variety of training and practice needed.

It is incumbent on us to meet the demand to educate our firearms owners and ensure they have the appropriate knowledge level of firearms related information. To do this we need facilities for training to ensure our firearms owners can get the requisite training to learn “how” to do what they need to do and practice. Contrary to popular belief: Practice does not make perfect. “Perfect practice makes perfect.” Perfect practice requires qualified instructors and facilities to train and practice.

Firearms ownership in Maryland is increasing. According to a 7 July, 2022 Fox 5 news report the Maryland State Police reported a 900% increase in wear and carry applications. Additionally, the volume of requests caused their server to exceed its 24-hour 10,000 response limit two days in a row. I believe we must do all we can to ensure we have a commensurate level of qualified trainers and facilities to support our responsible gun owning residents.

We have other firearms training facilities in Anne Arundel County. However, we do not have enough of them to adequately serve the shooting public. The facility the D & J Enterprises request supports will fill an existing need for training and practice space that is currently in short supply. This complex also offers unique capabilities that do not exist elsewhere in the county. As an added benefit it will provide functional space for competitions that will bring others to our county and with them revenue for other small businesses.

I have seen firearms education and training from the business owner, trainer, safety officer, and shooter perspectives. I believe this facility is sorely needed and will serve our residents well.

I would like to offer a closing thought on safety. An indoor facility of this quality will provide two clear benefits that outdoor facilities normally cannot.

1. It will eliminate the potential noise pollution that can be associated with outdoor ranges as it is contained within the structure.
2. It virtually eliminates errant rounds from going "over the berm" and out into a populated area.

I fully support the approval of this special exception as the Chesapeake Shooting Center will well serve the residents of Anne Arundel County. Thank you for agreeing to hear from me on this matter.

Very respectfully,

Vincent L. Maida Jr.