

HB 481 / SB 889 would increase the maximum penalty for unpermitted wearing, carrying or transporting a handgun from 3 years to 5 years incarceration for a first offense, even if no other law-breaking was present. MAJR opposes this bill which could have the effect of increasing the number of Marylanders incarcerated and the length of their incarceration without improving public safety.

Back in 2015, the Maryland General Assembly recognized the principle that merely increasing prison sentences without treatment does not make an individual less likely to recidivate and, indeed, may have the opposite, unintended effect. See, for example, the [Final Report of Maryland's Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council](#) recognizing that: "A growing body of criminological research demonstrates that prison terms are not more likely to reduce recidivism than noncustodial sanctions.¹² For some offenders, including... first-time offenders, studies have shown that prison can actually increase the likelihood of recidivism."