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HOUSE BILL NO. 597

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled January 11, 2022

A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-308 of the Code of Virginia, relating to concealed handgun permits; penalties.

Patron—Scott, D.L.

Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 18.2-308 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-308. Carrying concealed weapons; exceptions; penalty.

A. If any person carries about his person, hidden from common observation, (i) any pistol, revolver, or other weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind by action of an explosion of any combustible material; (ii) any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, machete, razor, sling bow, spring stick, metal knucks, or blackjack; (iii) any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain; (iv) any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart; or (v) any weapon of like kind as those enumerated in this subsection, he is ~~guilty of a Class 4 misdemeanor~~ *shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$100. A person who commits a second violation of this section or a conviction under this section subsequent to any conviction under any substantially similar ordinance of any county, city, or town shall be punishable as a Class 6 felony subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$500, and a person who commits a third or subsequent such violation shall be punishable as a Class 5 felony subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000.* For the purpose of this section, a weapon shall be deemed to be hidden from common observation when it is observable but is of such deceptive appearance as to disguise the weapon's true nature. It shall be an affirmative defense to a violation of clause (i) regarding a handgun, that a person had been issued, at the time of the offense, a valid concealed handgun permit. *Unless otherwise disqualified from obtaining a concealed handgun permit pursuant to § 18.2-308.09, the provisions of this section shall not preclude any person from applying for a concealed handgun permit while such person is subject to a pending charge for a violation of this subsection. If a person offers to the court a valid concealed handgun permit that was issued during the pendency of the proceedings, the court may dismiss the charge.*

B. This section shall not apply to any person while in his own place of abode or the curtilage thereof.

C. Except as provided in subsection A of § 18.2-308.012, this section shall not apply to:

1. Any person while in his own place of business;
2. Any law-enforcement officer, or retired law-enforcement officer pursuant to § 18.2-308.016, wherever such law-enforcement officer may travel in the Commonwealth;
3. Any person who is at, or going to or from, an established shooting range, provided that the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported;
4. Any regularly enrolled member of a weapons collecting organization who is at, or going to or from, a bona fide weapons exhibition, provided that the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported;
5. Any person carrying such weapons between his place of abode and a place of purchase or repair, provided the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported;
6. Any person actually engaged in lawful hunting, as authorized by the Board of Wildlife Resources, under inclement weather conditions necessitating temporary protection of his firearm from those conditions, provided that possession of a handgun while engaged in lawful hunting shall not be construed as hunting with a handgun if the person hunting is carrying a valid concealed handgun permit;
7. Any attorney for the Commonwealth or assistant attorney for the Commonwealth, wherever such attorney may travel in the Commonwealth;
8. Any person who may lawfully possess a firearm and is carrying a handgun while in a personal, private motor vehicle or vessel and such handgun is secured in a container or compartment in the vehicle or vessel;
9. Any enrolled participant of a firearms training course who is at, or going to or from, a training location, provided that the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported; and

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59 10. Any judge or justice of the Commonwealth, wherever such judge or justice may travel in the
60 Commonwealth.

61 D. This section shall also not apply to any of the following individuals while in the discharge of
62 their official duties, or while in transit to or from such duties:

63 1. Carriers of the United States mail;

64 2. Officers or guards of any state correctional institution;

65 3. Conservators of the peace, except that a judge or justice of the Commonwealth, an attorney for the
66 Commonwealth, or an assistant attorney for the Commonwealth may carry a concealed handgun pursuant
67 to subdivisions C 7 and 10. However, the following conservators of the peace shall not be permitted to
68 carry a concealed handgun without obtaining a permit as provided in this article: (i) notaries public; (ii)
69 registrars; (iii) drivers, operators, or other persons in charge of any motor vehicle carrier of passengers
70 for hire; or (iv) commissioners in chancery; and

71 4. Noncustodial employees of the Department of Corrections designated to carry weapons by the
72 Director of the Department of Corrections pursuant to § 53.1-29.