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HOUSE BILL NO. 161

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled December 23, 2019

A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-308 of the Code of Virginia, relating to carrying a concealed handgun; permit not required.

Patrons—McGuire and Cole, M.L.

Referred to Committee on Public Safety

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, slingshot, 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 1 misdemeanor. 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, and a third or subsequent such violation shall be punishable as a Class 5 felony. 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.

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 Game and Inland Fisheries, 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

10. Any judge or justice of the Commonwealth, wherever such judge or justice may travel in the Commonwealth; and

11. For the sole purpose of carrying a concealed handgun, any resident who carries a concealed handgun anywhere he may lawfully carry a handgun openly within the Commonwealth and who is otherwise qualified under this article to obtain a resident concealed handgun permit. Such resident shall not be required to meet the requirements of subsection B of § 18.2-308.02 to carry a concealed handgun under this subdivision.

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59 D. This section shall also not apply to any of the following individuals while in the discharge of  
60 their official duties, or while in transit to or from such duties:  
61 1. Carriers of the United States mail;  
62 2. Officers or guards of any state correctional institution;  
63 3. Conservators of the peace, except that a judge or justice of the Commonwealth, an attorney for the  
64 Commonwealth, or an assistant attorney for the Commonwealth may carry a concealed handgun pursuant  
65 to subdivisions C 7 and 10. However, the following conservators of the peace shall not be permitted to  
66 carry a concealed handgun without obtaining a permit as provided in this article: (i) notaries public; (ii)  
67 registrars; (iii) drivers, operators, or other persons in charge of any motor vehicle carrier of passengers  
68 for hire; or (iv) commissioners in chancery;  
69 4. Noncustodial employees of the Department of Corrections designated to carry weapons by the  
70 Director of the Department of Corrections pursuant to § 53.1-29; and  
71 5. Harbormaster of the City of Hopewell.