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**HOUSE BILL NO. 568**

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled January 6, 2020

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-308 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 4 of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2 a section numbered 18.2-287.5, relating to carrying or storing firearms in motor vehicles and vessels; exceptions; penalty.*

Patron—Helmer

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 and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 4 of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2 a section numbered 18.2-287.5 as follows:**

**§ 18.2-287.5. Carrying or storing firearms in motor vehicles and vessels; exceptions; penalty.**

*A. Any person possessing or storing a firearm in a motor vehicle or vessel shall secure such firearm in a locked container, other than a glove box, that is not within the dominion and control of or readily accessible for prompt and immediate use by any person within the motor vehicle.*

*B. The provisions of this section shall not apply to law-enforcement officers, licensed security guards, military personnel in the performance of their lawful duties, or any person having a valid concealed handgun permit.*

*C. Any person who violates this section is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$2,500.*

**§ 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,*

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59 private motor vehicle or vessel and such handgun is secured in a container or compartment in the  
60 vehicle or vessel;

61 9. Any enrolled participant of a firearms training course who is at, or going to or from, a training  
62 location, provided that the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported; and

63 10. 9. Any judge or justice of the Commonwealth, wherever such judge or justice may travel in the  
64 Commonwealth.

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

67 1. Carriers of the United States mail;

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

69 3. Conservators of the peace, except that a judge or justice of the Commonwealth, an attorney for the  
70 Commonwealth, or an assistant attorney for the Commonwealth may carry a concealed handgun pursuant  
71 to subdivisions C 7 and 10 9. However, the following conservators of the peace shall not be permitted  
72 to carry a concealed handgun without obtaining a permit as provided in this article: (i) notaries public;  
73 (ii) registrars; (iii) drivers, operators, or other persons in charge of any motor vehicle carrier of  
74 passengers for hire; or (iv) commissioners in chancery;

75 4. Noncustodial employees of the Department of Corrections designated to carry weapons by the  
76 Director of the Department of Corrections pursuant to § 53.1-29; and

77 5. Harbormaster of the City of Hopewell.