

McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)

From: slepage58@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, June 14, 2023 9:25 AM
To: McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)
Subject: Senate Executive Committee Meeting on SB 175 Comment

I am not against this bill, as it provides something which is stable and continues to grow over time. The promised benefit the State has provided as a way to attract employees into State employment has not been properly funded for nearly 20 years. That is the issue which has brought us to this point in time.

The 1% Budget Carve Out assuming that the payroll Contribution remains at .36% will only get you to about 60%.

Therefore we know that this will not be enough.

We also know that Eligibility changes to Retiree healthcare will also not yield good results either....with only in some cases with the modeling of eligibility changes showing 1, 2 or at most 3% difference. So those efforts are not worth implementing as you have to weigh the benefit of a 1, 2 or 3% gain, versus upset employees and impeding the ability of the State to attract and retain employees.

A 2% Budget Carve Out will get you to about 93% of the unfunded OPEB Liability.

My back of the napkin calculations:

A 1.5% Budget Carve Out with a .36% Payroll Contribution with my back of the napkin calculations will get you to around 71%.

A 1.5% Budget Carve Out with a 1% Payroll Contribution (Jack Markell Administration had it at .90% and was reduced to .36% under the Carney Administration) , back of the napkin calculation will get you to about 86%.

Another way to do this, which I have not calculated yet is to support a \$100 million dollar carve out or 2% of the Budget Carve Out, whichever is greater and not to exceed the total amount of the contributions to the OPEB Fund is not allowed to exceed the annual required contribution, which is actuarially determined by the Board of Pension Trustees.

The whole thing with the OPEB is that you have a big financial hole. You need to fill that hole with as much as you can, and the quicker you can fill that hole, the quicker you can reach a more favorable discount rate for the OPEB Trust. Eventually the goal would be to reach a point where you would not have to contribute as much because at that point the OPEB Trust will be able to sustain the payment of those benefits with the investment you provide today.

93% is obviously better, but somewhere in the mid-80 percent would work toward whittling away at this unfunded liability.

I would also suggest that there be a Retiree Subcommittee (with the current make-up of members) reconvene every 5 years to make sure we are on the right trajectory in closing that gap.

Very Respectfully,
Steven LePage
Persian Gulf War Veteran – Desert Shield/Desert Storm
USAF, Retired
State of Delaware, Department of Technology and Information, Retired

**SUPPLEMENT ONE TO PRESENTATION TO RHBAS OF
FOUR STATE RETIREES ON FINANCES:
ERRATIC HISTORICAL DELAWARE FUNDING FOR
OPEB POINTS TO SOLUTION OF CODIFIED
ENHANCED FUNDING**

May 8, 2023

Robert J. Clarkin (Retired State Employee)
Steven LePage (Retired State Employee, USAF Veteran)
Karen E. Peterson (Retired State Employee, Retired State Senator)
Mary B. Graham (Presenter, Spouse of Retired UD Professor)

DELAWARE'S HISTORIC FUNDING FOR OPEB - HIGHLY ERRATIC

Graphs in our RHBAS presentation of 3/22/23 show erratic historical funding for OPEB assets (i.e. OPEB equity portion) by budget bills: (a) percents of payroll (graphed as percentages)*; and (b) recent 1% of (prior-year) budget funding (graphed as dollars).

- Secretary of DOF has now provided us information on *all* sources of funding over twenty years (i.e. beyond budget bill funding).
- Totality of information paints even more erratic funding picture. No wonder OPEB liability has grown. See slides 4-12 below. *The promised Medicare Supplement benefit is not the problem – it's the insufficient, unstable funding for retiree healthcare!*

UNTIL DELAWARE CODIFIES AND STABILIZES FUNDING OF OPEB, THE LIABILITY CONCERN FOR FUTURE HEALTHCARE WILL PERSIST

- Codification of enhanced funding, even 1%, allows for favorable 7% interest rate
- Big impact on unfunded OPEB liability. *More impact than Medicare (Dis)Advantage which has no impact on substantial liability for non-Medicare retiree benefit. And MA by itself does not get the 7% rate. (See RBSC 8/30/21 WTW presentation Slide 17 showing how relatively less effective MA is at impacting unfunded liability.)*

*Percentages of payroll in original slide 21 for FY2007-2011 have been corrected. The new slide, also containing additional earlier years, only emphasizes the instability of un-codified funding.

You ask: If codification of enhanced funding for OPEB assets is so helpful, how can WTW give only one yelp “\$” rating for 1% funding (one \$ means impact < \$1B in 2052)?

- **Is WTW's rating smoke?**
- *Think about it.* Suppose you assume only \$47M (current carveout for 2023) each year of enhanced 1% funding, i.e. no growth in state budget. Even with 0% interest, by 2044, accumulated assets from that would be \$1.034B (i.e. \$47M x 22 yrs = \$1.034B). So something is off with WTW yelp ratings.
- *Assume instead,* yearly budget increase of 3.6% (State's assumption) and 7% interest rate after 2 years (*per Secretary DOF*). Result of codified 1% enhanced funding for OPEB assets is some \$6.8B at 2052. If include growth of existing assets already in fund, result is some \$10B (back of the napkin).
- **So what's behind the smoke?** Likely WTW not assuming (a) codification or (b) that funding for assets stays in assets, *e.g.* yearly “pay-go” payments don't keep up with healthcare costs and assets are raided. **If they disagree, “SHOW THEIR WORK,” as math professors say. Including assumptions.**

WTW AND DOF SHOULD BE TRANSPARENT ABOUT ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY. THE RHBAS SHOULD INSIST ON CLEAR, DISTINCT PROJECTIONS WITH NO HIDDEN ASSUMPTIONS. OR ITS WORK WILL BE SUBJECT TO LEGITIMATE CRITICISM.

Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Funding Sources

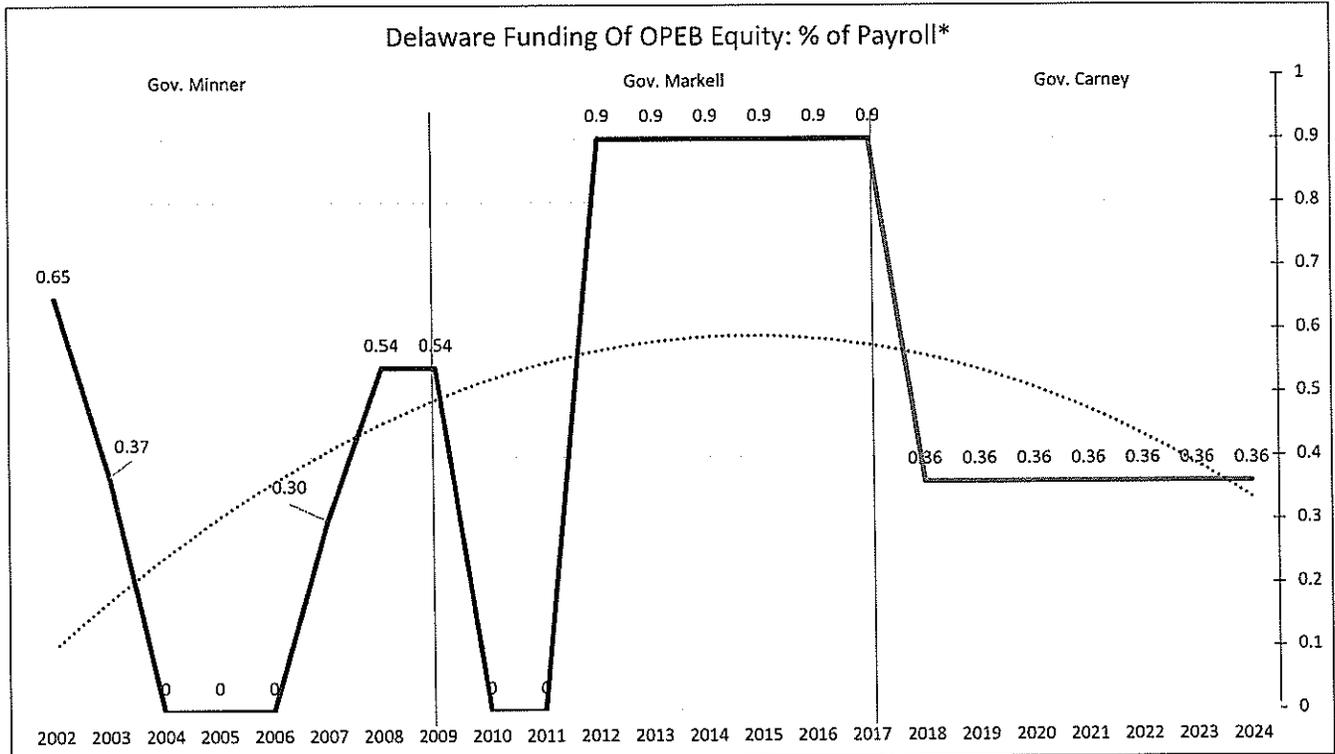
1. OPEB Contributions Table FY2002 – FY2024*
2. Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: % of Payroll
3. Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Dollars From % Of Payroll
4. Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Budget Carveout Contributions
5. Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Escheat Unclaimed Property Contributions
6. Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Healthcare Savings Contributions
7. Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Medicare Part D Contributions
8. Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Low Income Sub Program Contributions

NOTE: *Table information is based on budget bill allocations, actual data and Trust Fund receipts for FY 2002 through FY 2022 as provided by the Department of Finance. For FY2023 & FY2024, only the information on budget bill allocations is available. Charts and Graphs are based on all this information.

OPEB Contributions FY2002 - FY2024*

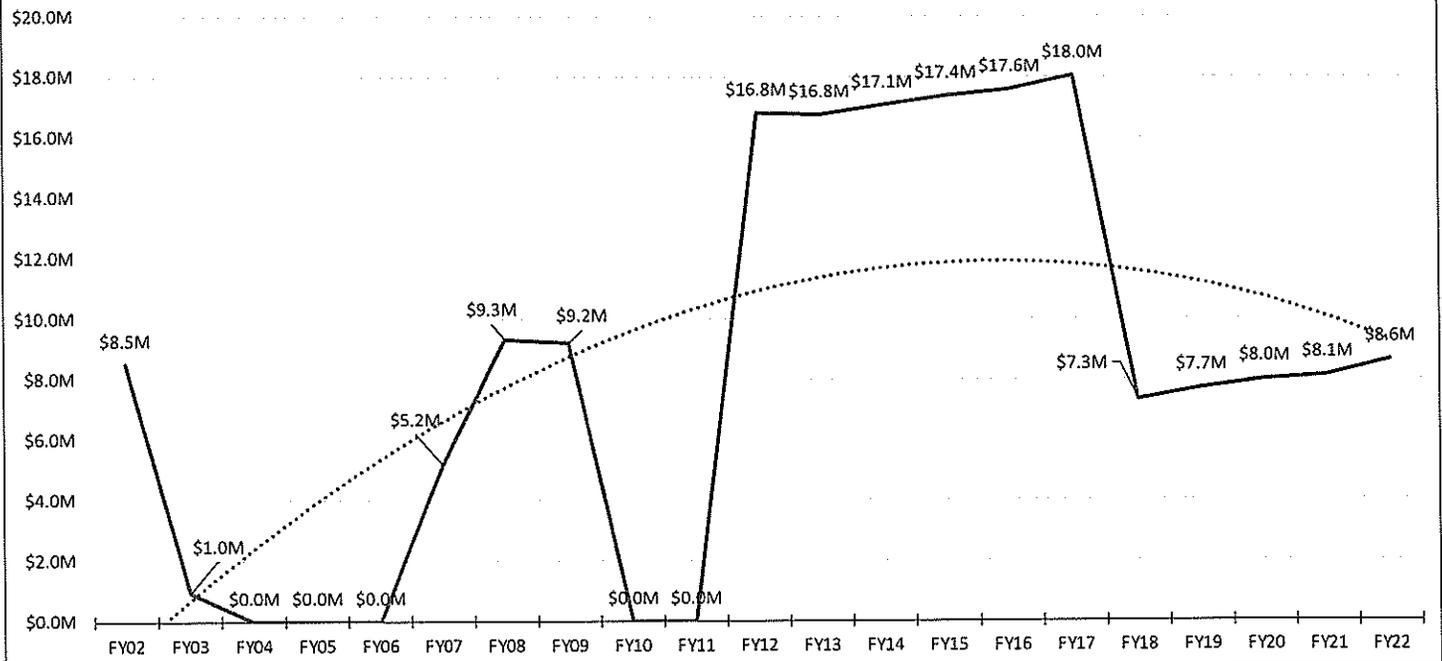
Year	As a % of Payroll	Health Care**		Medicare	Low Income	Budget	Total
		Prog Savings	Escheat	Part D	Sub Prog	Carveout	
FY02	\$ 8,541,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,541,000
FY03	\$ 954,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 954,000
FY04	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FY05	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FY06	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000
FY07	\$ 5,190,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,190,000
FY08	\$ 9,329,607	\$ 30,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39,829,607
FY09	\$ 9,218,503	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,218,503
FY10	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000
FY11	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 9,694,955	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,694,955
FY12	\$ 16,821,807	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,821,807
FY13	\$ 16,763,645	\$ -	\$ 3,608,329	\$ 11,233,122	\$ 55,860	\$ -	\$ 31,660,956
FY14	\$ 17,069,422	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,127,932	\$ 124,958	\$ -	\$ 23,322,313
FY15	\$ 17,380,391	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 123,993	\$ -	\$ 17,504,383
FY16	\$ 17,583,169	\$ (8,765,492)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 153,422	\$ -	\$ 8,971,099
FY17	\$ 18,037,913	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 158,291	\$ -	\$ 18,196,204
FY18	\$ 7,315,573	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 157,372	\$ -	\$ 7,472,946
FY19	\$ 7,698,405	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 144,999	\$ -	\$ 7,843,404
FY20	\$ 7,981,142	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 158,972	\$ -	\$ 8,140,114
FY21	\$ 8,112,921	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 144,887	\$ -	\$ 8,257,808
FY22	\$ 8,624,666	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 132,480	\$ -	\$ 8,757,147
FY23	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 47,061,000	\$ 47,061,000
FY24	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 49,913,300	\$ 49,913,300
Total	\$ 176,622,165	\$ 21,734,508	\$ 33,608,329	\$ 27,056,009	\$ 1,355,235	\$ 96,974,300	\$ 357,350,546

NOTE: *FY2002-FY2022 Data acquired from the Department of Finance. FY2023-FY2024 Budget Carveouts added from Budget Bills.
 **Unclear to us what the Health Care Savings Program represents as a source of funding/contributions.



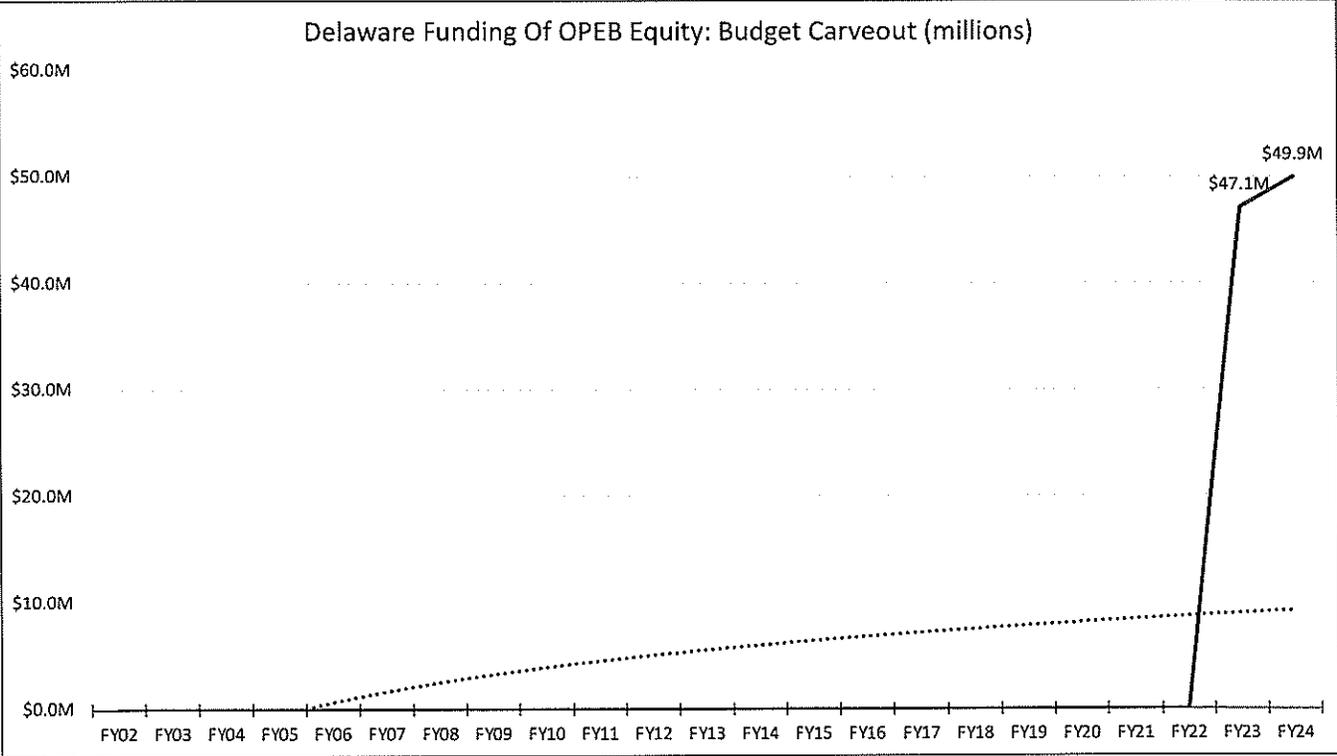
*This corrects the percentages for FY2007-2011 from original slide 21 of Retirees' presentation and adds data provided by DOF.

Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Dollars From % Of Payroll*

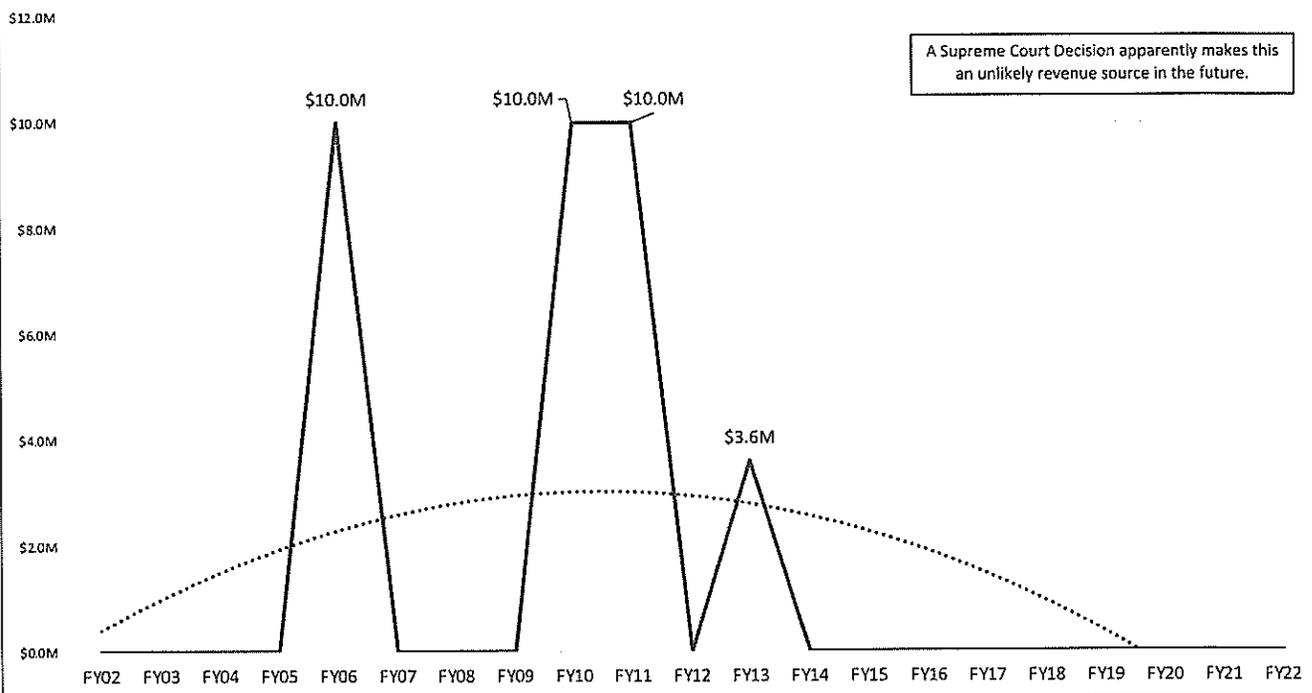


* Our slide disagrees from the DOF 4/3/23 slide for 2016. DOF apparently reduced the % of payroll dollar amount by the amount of the deficit in healthcare claims versus premiums. We do not believe such a set-off is appropriate for purposes of showing actual funding from specific sources.

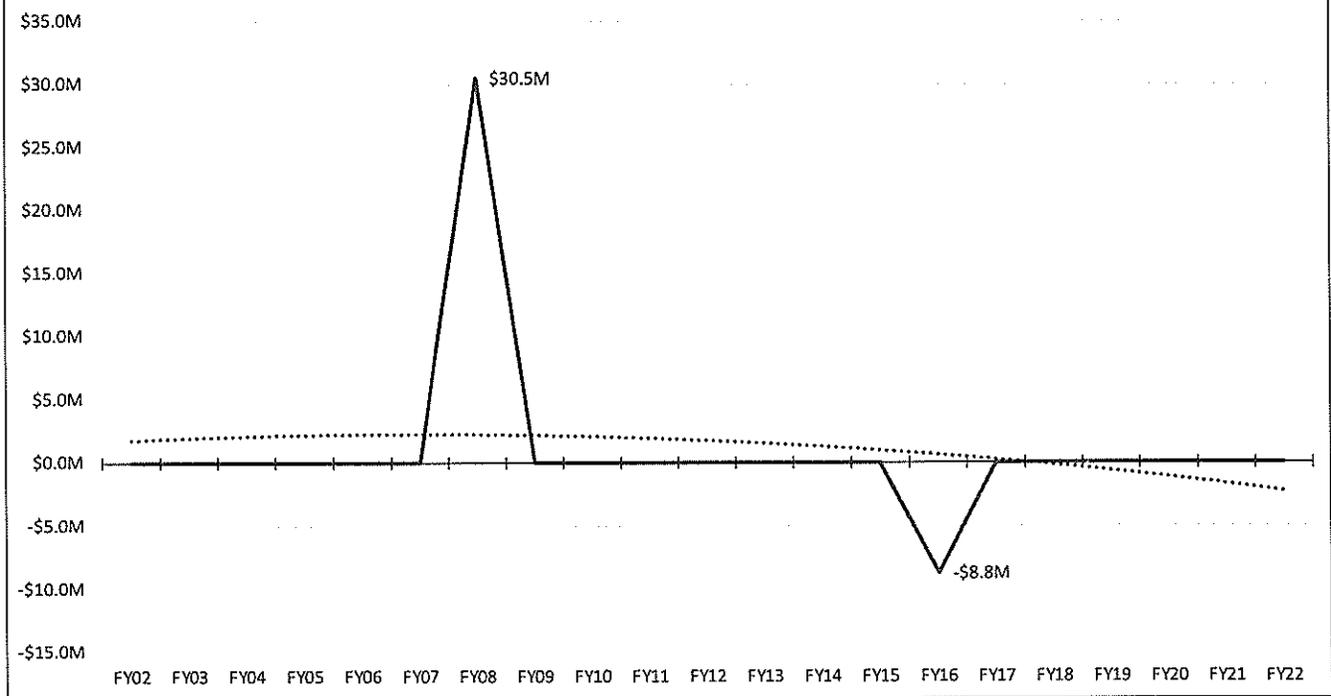
Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Budget Carveout (millions)



Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Escheat-Unclaimed Property

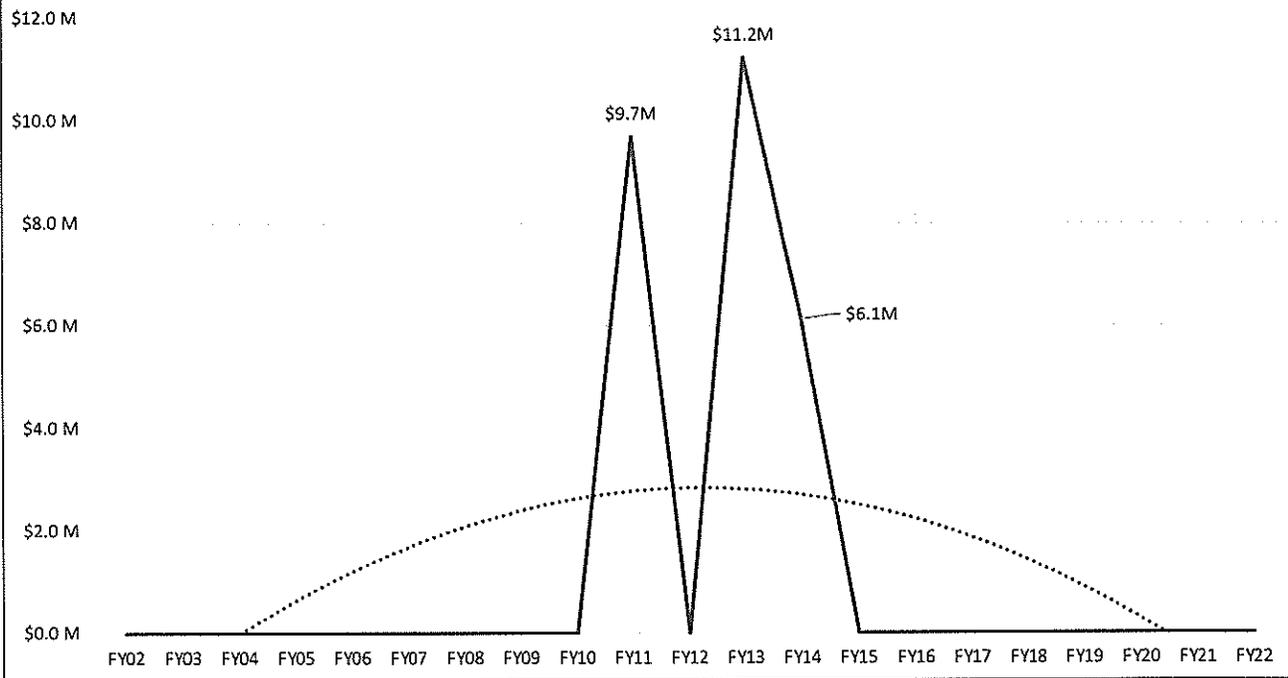


Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Healthcare Program Savings*

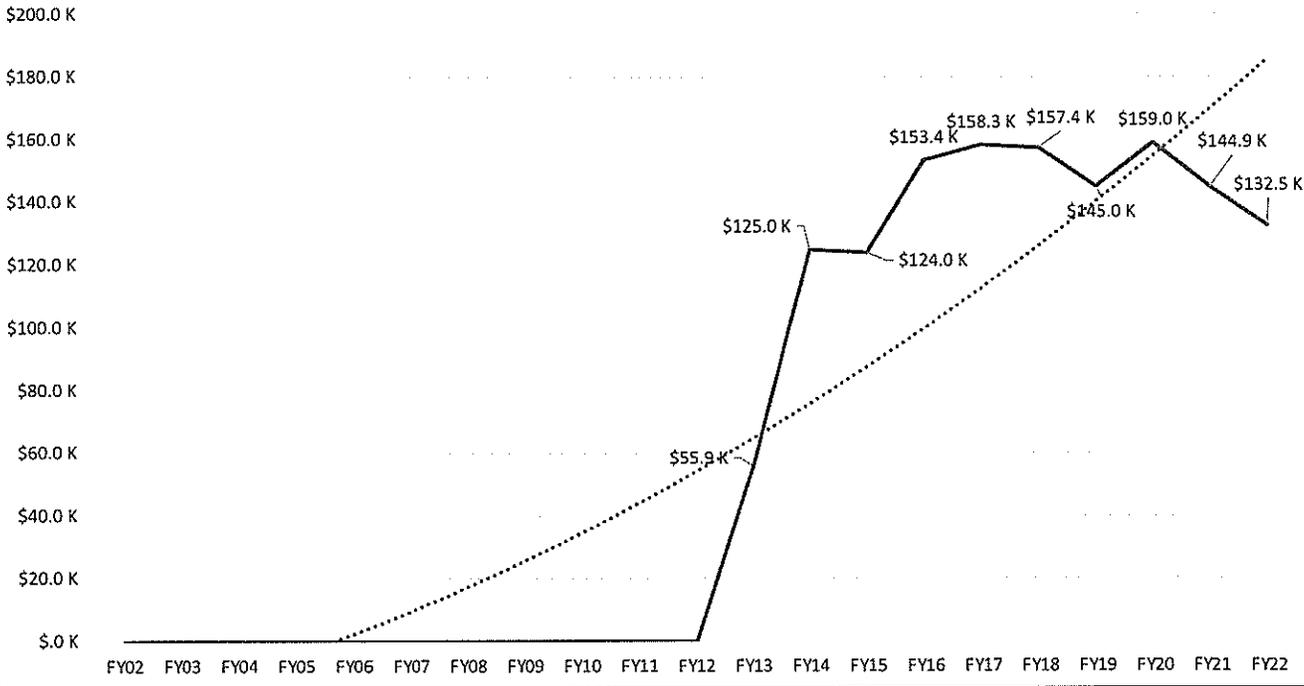


*Unclear to us what the Health Care Savings Program represents as a source of funding/contributions

Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Medicare Part D (millions)



Delaware Funding Of OPEB Equity: Low Income Sub Program (thousands)



McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)

From: Traci Murphy <tracimurphy@decagv.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 14, 2023 11:05 AM
To: McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)
Cc: Schwartzkopf, Peter (LegHall); Dennis Greenhouse
Subject: Public Comment for HB 201

Apologies for missing today's Executive Committee meeting in person, I'm traveling for a conference with the Joyce Foundation, whose research I reference in my remarks below:

HB 201

Dear Members of the Senate Executive Committee,

I'm writing today to offer public comment in support of HB 201.

It is imperative that Delaware expand its protections of schools and rec zones where our children learn and play. Unsafe children can't learn. Scared children can't learn. Traumatized children can't learn. We know that Delaware schools have been having more and more incidents of guns being brought to school and we simply must do everything we can to prevent this behavior.

We at DECAGV are grateful to leaders who prioritize the safety and well being of children and families over the gun lobby's "guns everywhere, no exceptions" trope.

Traci Murphy
Executive Director
Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence

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TRACI MANZA MURPHY
Executive Director
Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence
tracimurphy@decagv.org

McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)

From: Erin Chronister <echron30@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2023 1:39 PM
To: McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)
Subject: HB 201 -Sensitive places AKA Safe School and Recreational Zone

OPPOSE HB 201

HB 201 w/HA 3 is a SENSITIVE PLACES BILL that will prevent CCDW permit holders and lawful individuals from carrying in MANY locations that we regularly frequent because of just TWO WORDS - "Recreation Zone"

Within the bill "Safe School or Recreation Zone includes:

c. Any building or structure owned, operated, leased or rented by any county or municipality, or by the State, or by any board, agency, commission, department, corporation or other entity thereof, or by any private organization, which is utilized as a recreation center, athletic field or sports stadium.

Your county/town/church park. Your kid's ball field/soccer field. Private businesses such as trampoline parks, theaters, gyms, Chuckie Cheese, etc. Beaches. Skate park.

What exactly is a Recreation Zone if it's not defined within the Delaware Code?

The EPA, a government agency, defines it as

"What is considered a recreational area? Recreational areas would include land that is designed, constructed, designated, or used for recreational activities. Examples are national, state, county, or city parks, other outdoor recreational areas such as golf courses or swimming pools and bodies of waters (oceans, lakes, rivers, and streams) when used by the public for fishing, swimming, or boating. Public and private areas that are predictably used for hunting, fishing, bird watching, bike riding, hiking, or camping or other recreational use also would be considered recreational areas.

<https://www.epa.gov/rmp/definition-recreational-area-determining-offsite-impacts-rmp>

*Erin Chronister
Women's Defense Coalition
Preseident*

I'm George Higgins, a resident of Newark, and I thank you for this opportunity to speak in SUPPORT of House Bill 201. When passed, this bill will enable law enforcement officers to screen for high-risk individuals and enable interdiction BEFORE tragedy strikes in school and recreational zones.

As a gun owner myself, I am constantly appalled by the irresponsible behavior of people who have access to firearms. People who misuse their *right* to own a firearm to summarily *kill* or *maim* other human beings.

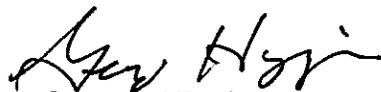
New technology has emerged to enable the use of existing camera surveillance systems to detect and alert to the presence of firearms. Firearms carried into schools. Into recreational areas. Professional law enforcement and former military are employed to assess real-time situations and immediately notify on-site and local law enforcement officers when threats are verified.

HB 201 ensures police and security CAN act immediately when a person possesses a firearm – BEFORE shots are fired.

I've owned guns since the 1960s and HB 201 is NOT taking away my right to possess firearms. HB 201 protects the right of citizens to live without the constant threat of gun violence.

Having seen the devastating effects that gun violence has on individuals, families, and communities, I believe we all have a role to play in reducing the misuse of firearms.

As a responsible gun owner, I urge our elected officials to support and pass this bill into law. Let's work together to ensure the safe and responsible use of firearms in our community. Thank you.



George Higgins

239 North Star Road

Newark, DE 19711

Former Navy Seals using AI to keep kids safe

 [wxyz.com/news/former-navy-seals-develop-technology-to-alert-schools-businesses-of-potential-active-shooters](https://www.wxyz.com/news/former-navy-seals-develop-technology-to-alert-schools-businesses-of-potential-active-shooters)

Kimberly Craig

May 27, 2022

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. (WXYZ) — "If we save one human life, everything will have been worth it," said Sam Alaimo, a former Navy Seal and co-founder of ZeroEyes.

ZeroEyes uses artificial intelligence to detect close to 200 different firearms before anyone posing a threat might even get the chance to fire a shot.

"We do it to save lives," Alaimo told 7 Action News Thursday.

Combining its gun detection technology to existing surveillance cameras at schools or workplaces, ZeroEyes is able to detect firearms as soon as they become visible.

Military veterans, familiar with operating calmly in highly stressful situations, monitor the systems around the clock, analyze any images detected and notify their clients and first responders.

Unlike a lot of video monitoring services, analysts for ZeroEyes are not flooded with countless camera feeds. Instead, their analysts sit in front of a blank screen that only displays images when their technology, embedded in the surveillance camera systems, detects a firearm.

And, in less than five seconds, Alaimo said their human analyst is able to verify whether the highlighted image is actually a firearm to avoid a false positive. If the image is an actual firearm, the analyst immediately sends an alert to their clients and first responders. The alert includes the visual image and location of the subject.

"We never stream live feeds," Alaimo said. "We can't store personal data. There's no privacy concern. There's no ethical concern. We just get that image when our algorithm says, 'Here's a gun. Do with it what you will.' And then we enact our protocols so that our client can enact their security protocols before a shot is even fired."

ZeroEyes is currently being used in schools in 18 states, including Michigan at **Oxford High School**, where administrators are said to be evaluating using the technology service beyond their free pilot program with the company.

"Since 1970, there have been nearly 1,650 school shootings with no signs of slowing down," said Mike Lahiff, CEO and co-founder of ZeroEyes. "No child should ever have to experience the horror of such an incident. We are proud to partner with the Oxford district and the state of Michigan to protect its students. We encourage all Michigan residents to ask your legislator to fund AI weapon detection technology."

More information on ZeroEyes can be found on [its website](#).

New artificial intelligence feature to detect guns through surveillance video

abc7news.com/gun-safety-artificial-intelligence-omnilert-security-cameras/7431778

October 28, 2020

The company Omnilert is rolling out new technology that allows security cameras to identify a gun, and alert guards in the area of the potential threat.

Security cameras have become valuable tools to identify threats of violence. There's a new development Wednesday that adds artificial intelligence that can detect guns in security video.

The new dimension of artificial intelligence, or AI, has the potential to prevent a mass casualty event.

"We needed to move away from the thinking that emergency mass notification systems were all about notification," said David Fraser, CEO of Omnilert.

Fraser demonstrated its new Gun Detect technology it claims to be an industry first using AI. Utilizing existing camera networks in a large-scale setting, such as a school or airport or large business campus, algorithms can identify a gun or shotgun. The system first flags the gun in orange as suspicious, then goes to red alert in seconds.

"They basically can make a high-resolution determination of whether this is a real threat or not," said Fraser.

A new law enforcement team could soon be created in Santa Clara County to help identify and remove firearms from gangsters, felons, or those who are the subject of domestic violence restraining orders.

In the demonstration for ABC7 News, a suspect with a face mask walks into view of a security camera, briefly casing out the room and then pulling out a gun. Artificial intelligence identifies it as a threat.

"After that," noted Fraser, "it's a single click to be able to initiate a predefined set of actions."

A cell phone pop-up notifies a security officer. Software then provides a still photo to get details of the gun and a description of the suspect. Then a decision can be made whether to dispatch first responders or to dismiss it as a false alarm. AI knows, for example, that a sprinkler head is not a gun.

Low-light conditions or an impaired field of vision could impact AI's ability to recognize a threat. However, AI is showing promise of early warning before shots are fired.

Mike Leone is a senior analyst at Enterprise Strategy Group.

"Over time and as we continue to collect video and as we better train some of these algorithms and models and to best detect those images or objects, I think it's only going to get better," he said.

Omnilert sees college campuses as a key market for its AI technology.

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McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)

From: GEORGE HIGGINS <irmc@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, June 15, 2023 5:06 PM
To: McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)
Subject: Testimony before the Senate Executive Committee
Attachments: road-rage slaying of woman by concealed carry permit holder.pdf

Yesterday I gave oral testimony before the committee in support of HB 201. I would like to submit the attached written testimony to further amplify my statements.

With appreciation,
George

George Higgins
302-239-0762 (home)
302-690-6276 (cell)

June 15, 2023

To: Valerie McCartan [Valerie.McCartan@delaware.gov]

From: George Higgins [ghirmc@gmail.com]

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 201 w/HA 3

Yesterday I testified in person in support of House Bill 201. I would like to document my opening remarks made before the Committee.

In my testimony I had responded to Senator Pettyjohn's assertion, in his remarks to Senator McBride, that training, skill development, situational awareness, and education about gun safety and responsible use, somehow makes concealed carry permit holders safe citizens. Senator Pettyjohn was arguing that concealed carry permit holders should be exempted from restrictions to carry guns in safe school and recreation zones.

I disagree.

To use a real-case example of a 'good guy with a gone' gone tragically bad, I spoke of a shooting that had taken place in nearby West Chester Pennsylvania:

As highlighted in the attached news articles, David Desper, the assailant, had a permit to carry his 40-caliber Smith and Wesson semi-automatic handgun that he had legally purchased in November 2015.

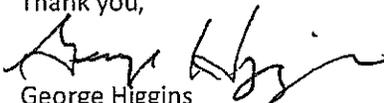
As he, and 18-year old Bianca Roberson jockeyed their respective vehicles for position as the two-lane Rt 100 road narrowed, Desper pulled out his gun and shot Bianca in the head, killing her instantly.

Judge Wheatcraft said to Desper during sentencing, "I don't believe you were afraid, I believe it was anger."

As a gun owner myself, I am appalled by the irresponsible behavior of people who have access to guns, whether permitted or not. Desper's firearm, stored conveniently in the center console of his pick-up truck, was all too easy to brandish and fire during a moment of unpredictable rage. If that gun had not been so easily accessible, Bianca Roberson would not have been shot and David Desper would not be serving 20 to 40 years in a Pennsylvania Prison.

Let's not confuse having a concealed carry permit with being immune from uncontrollable anger.

Thank you,



George Higgins
239 North Star Road
Newark, DE 19711

Man facing murder charges in road-rage slaying of woman, 18

AP apnews.com/article/north-america-pa-state-wire-west-chester-us-news-ap-top-news-f84fe95921bf43ee970ef0c23e73a72b

July 2, 2017



This Sunday, July 2, 2017 photo provided by the West Goshen Police Department shows David Desper. Police said Desper, of Trainer, Pa., turned himself in accompanied by an attorney early Sunday and was charged with first- and third-degree murder, possession of an instrument of crime, and reckless endangering in Wednesday's death of Bianca Roberson in West Goshen Township during a road rage confrontation as the two tried to merge in a single lane. (West Goshen Police Department via AP)

WEST CHESTER, Pa. (AP) — A Pennsylvania man was in custody Sunday for what a prosecutor called the "savage" and "senseless" death of a recent high school graduate shot in the head during a road-rage confrontation as the two tried to merge in a single lane.

David Desper, 28, of Trainer, turned himself in accompanied by an attorney early Sunday, and police said he was charged with first- and third-degree murder, possession of an instrument of crime, and reckless endangering in the death of 18-year-old Bianca Roberson in West Goshen Township.

Desper and Roberson, who had just graduated from Bayard Rustin High School in West Chester and was planning to attend Jacksonville University in Florida this fall, were trying to merge into a single lane Wednesday as a two-lane road narrowed, Chester County District Attorney Thomas Hogan said.

"They jockeyed for position, and he wasn't happy, so he pulled out a gun and shot Bianca in the head, killing her instantly," he said.

After Roberson was shot, her car veered off the road, struck a tree and was found in a ditch. The shooter fled in a red pickup, driving partly along the shoulder of the highway until exiting the road. Authorities tracked the suspect vehicle on surveillance video and sorted through hundreds of tips from the public, calling on the suspect to turn himself in for his own sake and for the sake of the family.

“We got a crucial piece of evidence from Bianca herself, because the round recovered from her was reviewed by a forensic ballistics expert who told us that that round came from a 40-caliber Smith and Wesson semi-automatic handgun,” Hogan said.

Desper had a permit to carry the gun, which he purchased in November 2015, Hogan said.

After Desper turned himself in, the dented red pickup truck sought in the shooting was found in nearby Glen Mills, and the 40-caliber semi-automatic handgun police believed was used was found in the suspect’s bedroom, Hogan said.

Asked if race was a factor in the slaying — Desper is white and Roberson black — Hogan said there was no indication that race played a role. “This appears to be a savage, senseless and brutal act from one human being to another human being,” he said.

Desper remained in custody without bail. Defense attorney Daniel McGarrigle declined comment Sunday.

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Courtroom Moved to Tears During David Desper's Sentencing Hearing for Road Rage Killing of 18-Year-Old Bianca Roberson

 [nbcphiladelphia.com/news/national-international/man-killed-teen-road-rage-shooting-sentenced/206687](https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/national-international/man-killed-teen-road-rage-shooting-sentenced/206687)

Vince Lattanzio, Alicia Victoria Lozano, Pamela Osborne, Deanna Durante

A Chester County man will serve 20-40 years behind bars after fatally shooting a teen girl who was just trying to merge into traffic. David Desper apologized to Bianca Roberson's family in court on Thursday as they sobbed in the courtroom.

What to Know

- David Desper will spend at least 20 years in a Pennsylvania prison for the road rage shooting death of 18-year-old Bianca Roberson.
- Desper was sentenced Thursday to a maximum of 40 years. He'll be eligible for parole in 2038.
- The hearing was fraught with emotion as Roberson's parents addressed the killer directly. The judge was moved to tears by their comments.

A Chester County courtroom was moved to tears Thursday as the parents of a teenage girl who was murdered in a road rage shooting last year demanded maximum prison time for the man who ended her life.

David Desper will serve at least 20 years in a Pennsylvania prison for the murder of 18-year-old Bianca Roberson. Common Pleas Judge Ann Marie Wheatcraft sentenced the 28-year-old to a maximum of 40 years, but he will be eligible for parole in 2038.

Desper, of Trainer, Pennsylvania, pleaded guilty in September to shooting the college-bound teen in the head as they jockeyed for position along Route 100 in June 2017. Roberson was killed instantly. Her car swerved off the highway and into the woods as Desper fled. He went to a friend's house in Delaware and hid for several days before turning himself in.

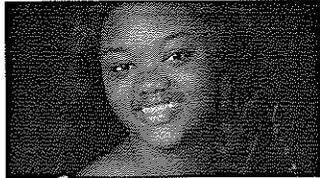
Courtroom Moved to Tears at Desper Sentencing

Chester County Assistant District Attorney Chris Miller noted that during Desper's time hiding, he played mini golf and ate pancakes.

"What kind of man shoots a little girl and then eats pancakes?" Miller asked. "Our character is what we do when we think no one is looking. What did the defendant do? He fled."

At first, Roberson's family thought she died in a tragic accident, but days later they learned it was a bullet that claimed the teen's life.

Her parents, Rodney and Michelle Roberson, delivered heartbreaking statements to the court Thursday morning, saying dreams for their daughter's future were ripped apart the day she died.



Bianca Roberson |

"I hate you," Michelle Roberson said to Desper.

The judge and courtroom staff wiped away tears as she went on, recounting happy moments with her daughter that she will never experience again.

"All I have left of Bianca is my memories," Rodney Roberson said in a separate statement.

"My questions for the defendant are simple: Why in God's name did you shoot my daughter? Because she was young? Because she was black? Because she was a girl? Because you wanted to go first on the road? Because you had a bad day?"

Desper looked down and cried as Roberson's parents spoke.

Bianca's grandmother, family friends and a school administrator also delivered statements. Emotions ran so high in the courtroom that, at one point, the judge called a short recess.



After the break, Desper addressed the courtroom with his hands shackled as he choked back tears. He sobbed while attempting to apologize to the Roberson family. They just shook their heads. Roberson's mother abruptly left while he spoke.

"I am so sorry," Desper said. "I would do anything to take it back."

Earlier, family and friends described the convicted murderer as a "gentle giant" who was kind and always willing to help. His mother, Wendy Desper, said that she wanted to speak with Roberson's mother "mom to mom."

"She's not a mom today because of what my son did," Wendy Desper said, sobbing and clutching a tissue.

But the judge, who also cried while delivering her own statement, said that Desper could never take back what he did.

"I don't believe you were afraid," Judge Wheatcraft said to Desper. "I believe it was anger."

Here's Rodney Roberson's full victim impact statement:

Dear Judge Wheatcraft,

My name is Rodney Roberson. I am, and forever will be, the father of Bianca Roberson.

Everybody thinks I am a tough guy. I was raised in West Philadelphia. I enlisted in the United States Army, served honorably, then enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, and served honorably again. When I finished my service with the Marines, I returned to West Philly, but I quickly saw that there was nothing but trouble there. I then joined the United States Merchant Marines, where I have worked for the last 28 years. We move big ships around the country and world. My work is hard, but it is honest work. So maybe I am a tough guy.

But not when it came to Bianca. She was my youngest child, my baby. She always could make me smile and make life a little brighter.

Let me tell you about my little girl. Bianca was a child who was always happy, and she brought that joy to everyone around her. With adults, she was shy and respectful. With her friends, she was kind, gentle, and funny. To me, she was the smartest and most beautiful young woman in the world.

When you are a father, you laugh at your sons, but you worry about your daughters. Who will be there to protect them when you are not around? Will they always be safe? What can you do to make sure they don't get hurt? Nothing hurts a dad more than his daughter's tears.

Bianca was hard-working and generous. She got a job at the McDonald's on Gay Street in West Chester. I would go there to eat just to see her working, proud that she had a job. She would whisper to me, "Dad, you have to go home!" But I would just sit and watch her working, smiling at my little girl. Then, when she got her first paycheck, she insisted on taking me out to dinner, just to say thank you for being her father. I told her that I would pay, but she refused, her quiet way of telling me she loved me and that she was growing up.

My wife and I decided to raise Bianca in Chester County because it was safe. We didn't want to risk the violence of West Philadelphia. We wanted her to grow up around nice people in a nice place.

We wanted everything for Bianca. I wanted her to go to college, something I never got to do. She was going to Jacksonville University on a scholarship, ready to study crime scene forensics. I wanted her to graduate and get a good job, working in an office and getting paid

good money without breaking her back working on the docks. I wanted her to fall in love, get married, and then have kids. She always told me that she was going to have six kids -- three boys and three girls. I wanted to live long enough to spoil my grandchildren.

All my dreams for Bianca were coming true. Until the day that the defendant murdered my daughter.

My questions for the defendant are simple. Why in God's name did you shoot my daughter? Because she was young? Because she was black? Because she was a girl? Because you wanted to go first on the road? Because you had a bad day?

How do you think your family would feel if somebody had murdered you like you murdered my daughter?

All I have left of Bianca is my memories. She had a special song that she said was her song just for me -- "Dancing With My Father" by Luther Vandross. It is a song about a child whose father died, and about how that child is praying for one more dance with her father. I always teased her that it was such a sad song and I planned on living forever anyway. Here is a little bit of the song:

*Back when I was a child
Before life removed all the innocence
My father would lift me high
And dance with my mother and me
And then
Spin me around 'till I fell asleep
Then up the stairs he would carry me
And I knew for sure
I was loved*

*If I could get another chance
Another walk
Another dance with him
I'd play a song that would never ever end
How I'd love love love
To dance with my father again*

Your Honor, I would love to dance with my daughter again. But I never will.

*Respectfully,
Rodney Roberson*

McCartan, Valerie (LegHall)

From: William Kuschel <wkroblg@use.startmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 15, 2023 4:08 PM
Subject: Gunfree zones do not automatically make dangerous people harmless!
Attachments: Gun-Free Zones from The Bill of Rights Sentinel Volume 1 Number 31 May 2023 Page 1 From Jews for the Preservation of Gun Ownership.pdf

Dear Legislators:

I do not support the further banning or control of guns in gun free school zones which are under the control of decent law abiding individuals such as: all active duty law enforcement with weapons certifications, licensed security guards with weapons certifications, licensed concealed carry permit holders, or Qualified retired law enforcement officers [weapons certified]. They will be referred to as **decent people** in this letter.

Some recent legislation seeks to limit the control of guns in the gun free school zones, this is a travesty against decent people. The decent people need to be able to protect themselves with guns. To create a very limited portion of decent people whom can only carry guns in these gun free school zones creates a **crime spree zone**. The security can be overwhelmed by criminal elements, or terrorists.

Ideally, all decent people should be able to carry guns in gun free school zones. This would cause the greatest decrease in crime.

At the very least to increase security, all weapons certified law enforcement officers, all weapons certified security guards, and all qualified retired law enforcement officers [weapons certified in accordance with LEOSA HR 218].

What is even more outrageous, it is the 1000 foot gun free school zone extending beyond the actual physical school property. This area effectively is unguarded, except when conducting limited traffic control usually by one officer if implemented. To ban a portion of decent people [off duty law enforcement, off duty security guards, concealed carry permit holders, or qualified retired law enforcement officers] from carrying guns in the 1000 foot gun free school zone is **absurd**. To have only one acceptable method [inside of a closed vehicle] of transporting guns through the 1000 foot gun free school zone is **absurd**. All decent people should have unlimited 24 hour access to the 1000 foot gun free school zone including curtilage of the actual school property to permit the safe use of sidewalks for walking [remember "climate change" and unaffordable electric cars] or by whatever transportation method of their choosing [Walking, scooter, skateboard, horse, horse and buggy, bicycle, moped, motorcycle, tractor, car, van, boat, etc.]

Please see the attached PDF

Thank you for time, sincerely,

William Kuschel

Gun-Free Zones from The Bill of Rights Sentinel Volume 1 Number 31 May 2023 Page 1 From Jews for the Preservation of Gun Ownership

Gun-Free Zones Are Dangerous

**It sounds good, but they don't work
–Alan Korwin, Sentinel Editor**

School mass murders (what mass media prefers to inaccurately call “shootings”) all occur in federally mandated gun-free zones. How is that even possible?

The problem isn't guns, or signs, or wishful thinking. It's mindset, and intelligence, which observation indicates is in precious short supply these days. When a psychotic maniac goes ballistic, and starts murdering (not quite the same as shooting) people, the evil that represents is not controlled by signs. You know that. Police know that. Every conscious person does, or should. Because some people are afflicted with the medical condition hoplophobia, a morbid fear of guns and other weapons, they don't know it, or suppress it, and act out on fantasy.

“If only we had one more law!” they think.

How's that working out for you? “Guns should be banned!” they demand. News flash: They are, for criminals and murderers. Thinking doesn't go deep enough to recognize that a so-called gun ban leaves authorities heavily Continued on Page 6

eaves authorities heavily armed, even with those nasty AR-15 one-shot-at-a-time rifles and more. Armed communist Chinese hordes (and Russians, and Iranians, and North Koreans, and the rest) aren't even an afterthought. Of course they're fully armed. This isn't about them, or is it.

Laws are suggestions

Sorry, laws are not laws as you probably think of them. Laws are guidelines only, established by a majority (or influential few) of people in power, so they can punish you after you've violated the rules. Laws cannot control behavior, never have, never will, far from it. They indicate which behaviors are banned, so you'll know what happens if you just do as you please. A system of laws only works if the people under them agree together to cooperate and abide by the rules. Law-abiding people actually don't need laws to say, "don't murder people."

They get that intrinsically, from good upbringing, or religion, or an internal moral sense of right and wrong. Leftists today reject the idea of right and wrong [sic], which is wrong.

No Guns Signs vs. Gunless Areas

Now gunless areas, that's another thing. An area can be made gunless, counterintuitively, by guns and force of arms. By using force to limit access and egress (entrance and exit), and monitoring who comes and goes in sufficient detail, an area can be made mostly gunless. It's not 100%, some slippage is always possible, or even likely. Anyone sufficiently determined can enter a gunless area with enough effort, if they're willing to endure enough risk.

"Officials" are never gunless in gun-free zones. And they adamantly refuse to do so, for good reason.

Look at the most common gunless area you en-

counter, airports. Are they gunless? No of course not. Heavily armed (and armored) people are all over the place. Most bear their arms openly, in obvious uniforms with shiny badges. You're willing to accept that they're safely armed, an oxymoron if ever there was one. If a shiny badge snaps, and goes homicidal, everyone in the safe gunless area is at mortal risk. Society screens these people carefully (not always so carefully) so it is a rare occurrence. Mr. Spock's wisdom is always present—"No one can guarantee the actions of another." All plans for disarming the public, eliminating your Second Amendment civil rights, turning everything into make-believe gun-free zones, disregard several crucial factors. Armed people are always present—police, not to put too fine a point on it. Heavily armed, with back up, guns are present in mythical gun-free zones. Bad actors can always approach fully armed, quickly murder the obvious armed people in the so-called gun-free zones, and then do what they will. Terrorists are famous for this, it's so easy.

Firearms training expert Lt. Col. Dave Grossman likes to say, "Open carry is good. They're my decoys." He says it sarcastically about civilians who brashly show off their arms in the open, instead of discreetly under important Constitutional Carry laws finally taking hold nationally. Airports (and similar places) often, and importantly, also have a handful of armed officials carrying discreetly, so murdering the uniformed folks has its limits. (Have you noticed by omitting the euphemism "shooting," and instead always saying, "murder," reality pokes through? It's something mass media declines to do.) A rash of Gun-Free-Zone laws started appearing under Slick Willie Clinton, a serial rapist and sex

abuser who remains unpunished and was our 42nd President. His wife, a phony posturing feminist known mostly by her first name, aided and abetted his transgressions. To make us safe (not really, but that was the story line, now called a "narrative"), he presided over enactment of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act. Again, how's that working out for you.

No, because so-called gun-free zones are a modern myth, you must keep in mind life is dangerous, and in the end you and you alone are responsible for your ultimate safety. Gun-free zones must be seen for what they are—not even gunless areas.

A comforting myth, the non-existent fantasies are designed to anesthetize the public, dispel fears, and leave armed authorities in charge. The effect on your safety is small to negligible. The only thing missing is a dose of soma. It's security theater.

As Prof. John Lott has researched and learned, the same as police know, murderers operate in tiny geographic areas, with horrific results, basically unreported. The notion that such crime is widespread is absurd, but popular. Despite the pablum mass media pushes, in lock step with authorities, hoplophobes and the power elite, personal firearms are responsible for constant elimination of evil people bent on destruction, shot (or dissuaded) in the act. "If so-called 'news' media would report accurately about guns (and crime and murderers), the gun debate would end."

—Second Amendment Foundation CEO Alan Gottlieb.

He's got it right.

Alan Korwin, an award-winning writer, speaker, musician and author of 14 books, has been the Editor of The JPFO Bill of Rights Sentinel since 2015, and is working on his 15th book, *Why Science May Be Wrong* [sic].