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Roberta DiMezza
Committee Clerk

Please distribute this to committee members as my March 13 hearngs testimony. Thank you.

PLEASE DO NOT SUPPORT THE AR BAN BILL H 7217

If you agree that laws should be based on facts and the likelihood of achieving positive results, you should not support H 7217, the assault weapons ban, for multiple reasons.

1. Gun control advocates claim AR-style rifles are widely used in homicides. Not true. According to the FBI, AR's were used in less than 3% of firearm murders in 2020, their most recent report.

2. Rhode Islanders who own firearms legally seldom commit crimes with them. The overwhelming majority of illegal gun use is by career criminals, who pay no attention to laws.

3. Career criminals almost never use ARs or any type of rifle. They far prefer handguns, almost always illegally possessed.

4. AR-style firearms are popular for home defense. They are easier to use safely and accurately than handguns, especially by women who prefer their light recoil.

5. After the 1994-2004 national AR ban, the definitive study by the Department of Justice could not find any connection between the ban and public safety. If a ban didn't work then, why will it work now?

6. RI gun owners are unlikely to comply with an AR ban. More than 85% of AR owners in Connecticut have not complied with their law similar to the one currently proposed here. New York State has roughly the same high level of noncompliance. Why would it be any different here? What's the point of passing a law that experience shows will not only be ignored but turn otherwise good Rhode Islanders into felons?

7. There is no reason to expect an AR ban will improve public safety, but will make it more difficult for members of the public to defend themselves. A well-informed, conscientious legislator would not support it.

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