

## **Anabella Mayorga**

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**From:** Bill Welch <welchinc1@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 11:17 AM  
**To:** House Judiciary Committee  
**Subject:** Gun bills testimony on H5436 3/26/25  
**Attachments:** House testimony 32025.pdf

## My firearms hearing testimony 3/26

### **Please do not support the AWB bill H5436**

The “Assault Weapons Ban of 2025” (H5436)—would make it illegal to own many if not most of the firearms that Rhode Islanders have used for decades to protect themselves and their loved ones against violent crime.

Backers of this bill claim so-called “assault weapons” are a major factor in homicides and if they were banned from public ownership, we would all be safer. Not true. The facts make it clear that passage of this bill would put Rhode Islanders at greater risk.

Gun control activists pushing this bill are either misinformed or purposely not telling the truth. For starters, the firearms they want to prevent you from owning are not “assault weapons.” Those are machine guns, which fire rapidly as long as the trigger is pressed. Ownership of automatic firearms has been essentially illegal in Rhode Island for years. This bill would ban many if not most semiautomatic firearms, which have been owned by the public since the late 1800s.

Gun control activists consciously chose to falsely call these firearms “assault weapons” to scare the public to back banning them. And they title the bill an assault weapons ban to mask the fact that it would eliminate public ownership of most modern rifles. This is a deceitful tactic they wouldn’t need to use if facts supported their position.

The rifles they want to eliminate are used in less than three percent of homicides. Career criminals and urban gangs commit the vast majority

of homicides. They almost never use the firearms this bill bans. And will criminals pay any attention to a law banning their use?

Connecticut and New York State have had “assault weapons” bans —similar to the one proposed in Rhode Island—for years. According to studies and newspaper articles, fewer than 15% of owners of banned firearms in those states have obeyed the law to turn in or register them. There’s no reason to expect Rhode Islanders’ compliance to be any better. Why are we spending all this valuable legislative time on a bill that is a clear failure in other states? Shouldn’t consciences legislators know this bill hasn’t worked?

Gun control activists claim the national “assault weapons” ban from 1994 to 2024 reduced homicides. Credible studies to determine the ban’s effectiveness could find no proof it did.

All we ever hear from gun control advocates is about the illegal use of firearms. They never mention that between 500,000 and 3 million times a year guns are used defensively for protection, according to the government’s Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They never mention that the firearms they want to ban are very popular for home protection. Many women like them because they have a light recoil and are easy to operate.

Jailed criminals say they fear armed civilians more than police. They avoid police but can be surprised by an armed private citizen.

Please do not support the QWB bill H5436.

Bill Welch

180 Mitchell’s Lane

Portsmouth, RI 02871

401 302 5897