

## Ariana Costa

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**From:** Chris Morin <cmorin543@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 9:32 AM  
**To:** House Judiciary Committee  
**Subject:** Opposition to House Bill 5436

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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House Committee on Judiciary  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 5436 – Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025

Dear Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

As a proud Rhode Islander, a committed public servant, and a veteran currently serving in the Rhode Island Army National Guard, I respectfully urge you, from the heart, to vote NO on House Bill 5436, the "Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025."

I write to you not only as a private citizen deeply concerned about our fundamental freedoms, but also as someone who has dedicated many years of my life to service—both in uniform and as a civilian striving to secure the safety and well-being of my fellow citizens. Throughout my military service, I've sworn multiple oaths to uphold and defend the United States and Rhode Island Constitutions. I took those oaths with great seriousness and reverence. Among the constitutional protections I hold sacred is the Second Amendment, echoed in Article I, Section 22 of our Rhode Island Constitution, clearly stating: "The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

HB 5436 would dramatically restrict, and even criminalize, the ownership of firearms widely and responsibly owned by Rhode Islanders. These firearms, often mislabeled as "assault weapons," are utilized safely and legally every day by thousands of law-abiding citizens, myself included, for sport, recreation, competitive shooting, and personal protection. Placing arbitrary restrictions based solely on cosmetic features such as adjustable stocks, pistol grips, or threaded barrels does nothing to address gun violence or improve public safety. It only infringes upon the rights of responsible, law-abiding gun owners like myself who cherish these freedoms deeply.

According to FBI crime statistics, rifles of all kinds—including those targeted by this bill—account for less than 3% of firearm-related homicides nationwide. Additionally, in 2004, after ten years of the federal assault weapons ban, the U.S. Department of Justice concluded clearly that the ban had produced no measurable impact on reducing gun violence. Their findings were unambiguous, highlighting that these types of firearms were rarely involved in criminal activities even before the federal ban. Implementing legislation shown repeatedly to have little or no meaningful impact on crime only punishes responsible gun owners without offering genuine solutions.

Throughout my life here in Rhode Island, I have always valued our state's deep-rooted traditions of independence, community, and responsible firearm ownership. As an advocate of the Second Amendment, I take my responsibilities as a firearm owner extremely seriously, diligently ensuring safe handling, secure storage, and compliance with existing laws. This bill unfairly and unnecessarily threatens responsible Rhode Islanders who have never posed any danger to society.

Furthermore, beyond personal concerns, this legislation would negatively affect Rhode Island businesses, shooting clubs, and local economies dependent upon responsible firearm ownership and recreational shooting sports. These activities foster positive community engagement, support local businesses, and promote responsible firearm education. HB 5436 risks harming our communities economically and socially without achieving any measurable enhancement to public safety.

I sincerely believe that our common goal is to create safer communities and reduce violence. To truly accomplish this, we must focus on effective strategies—such as supporting community-based violence intervention initiatives, mental health services, and enhancing enforcement against criminal firearm trafficking. Penalizing law-abiding citizens through arbitrary restrictions will only erode public trust and community well-being.

I respectfully ask you to consider my voice—not only as a gun owner, but also as your fellow Rhode Islander, a dedicated public servant, and as someone who has proudly served and sacrificed to protect the very rights we all cherish. Please stand with me, and countless other responsible citizens, in preserving these fundamental constitutional freedoms. Please vote NO on HB 5436.

Thank you sincerely for your thoughtful consideration of my heartfelt concerns. Your decision will reflect your commitment to Rhode Islanders, our constitutionally guaranteed freedoms, and our shared values.

Respectfully and sincerely yours,

Christopher Morin

Coventry, Rhode Island