



March 26, 2024

The Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr.  
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary  
State House, 82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
via email: [Rep-Craven@rilegislature.gov](mailto:Rep-Craven@rilegislature.gov)  
via email: [HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)

RE: H-5436 – Relating to Criminal Offenses – R.I. Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025

Dear Chairman Craven:

I write today in support of H-5436 – Relating to Criminal Offenses – Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025, which would define various assault weapons and would restrict the manufacture, sale, purchase, and possession of these assault weapons. Firearms are considered lethal means, which are objects that may be used by individuals experiencing suicidal crisis. Restricting firearm access, including through bans, can contribute to suicide prevention efforts by reducing the lethality of suicide attempts.

According to the National Council on Aging, while older adults comprise 16.8 percent of the U.S. population, they make up approximately 22 percent of suicides. The National Institutes of Health cite key risk factors associated with suicide among older adults as social isolation, chronic health conditions, depression, and access to lethal means. Addressing these factors forms the foundations of any suicide prevention effort. Older adults tend to employ highly fatal methods when attempting suicide. Implementing strategies limiting access to firearms, medications, and other deadly means can save lives.

The Office of Healthy Aging (OHA) is the designated state unit on aging, and we are charged with advocating for laws, policies and investments that protect the health and safety of older adults and adults living with disabilities. By implementing an assault weapons ban, we can assist in decreasing the incidence of suicide among the older adult population and promote healthy aging.

As always, I thank you for your partnership and consideration of this letter, and I urge the committee to support this bill. Your leadership and advocacy for Rhode Island's older adults and their families are appreciated.

Regards,

Maria Cimini  
Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary  
The Honorable Jason Knight  
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel for the Speaker of the House  
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy