

**DATE: March 25, 2025**

**TO: Rep. Robert E. Graven, Sr. and Members of the House Judiciary Committee**

**FROM: Mary Alice Smith, 397 Gibbs Avenue, Newport, RI**

**RE: Support for House Bill H5436**

**I reside in Newport and Rep. Lauren Carson is my state representative for District 75. I am a long-time member of the RI Coalition Against Gun Violence.**

**I write in support of Rep. Jason Knight's assault weapons regulation bill, H5436. It's time we get these deadly military-style firearms off our streets and help keep our communities safe. I ask that you move this bill out of committee and send it on to the House floor for a vote with the recommendation of passage.**

**These weapons are extremely powerful and deadly, inflicting battlefield style wounds. A regular handgun leaves linear tracks through the victim's body that are roughly the size of a bullet. The weapons are low velocity and often leave non-fatal wounds.**

**On the other hand, bullets from an AR-15 and similar weapons travel almost three times faster than a handgun's. The ammunition used by the AR-15 causes a significant cavitation effect — where a bullet is travelling so fast that it sends shock waves through the body and severely damages or kills displaced tissue. The shooter can cause more damage while being less accurate. The wounds are often far more lethal.**

**The AR-15 and weapons like it have been used in mass shootings in recent years including the Parkland, [Fla., high school](#) attack that left 17 people dead, as well as [attacks that took place](#) in Newtown, Conn., in 2012, San Bernardino, Calif., in 2015, Orlando, Fla., in 2016, [Las Vegas](#), 2017, and [Sutherland Springs](#), Texas, 2017.**

**From 2015 to 2022, mass shootings with four or more people killed where an assault weapon was used had nearly six times as many people shot, twice as many people killed, and 23 times the people wounded on average compared to shootings not involving the use of assault weapons.**

**These shootings are terrifying our children, according to a recent Children's Defense Fund study. Fear of a school shooting is the second most common worry of children between 6 and 17 years old and their parents.**

**I implore you to take action. Rhode Islanders deserve to live free from gun violence in so far as our society is able to discourage and prevent it.**

**Thank you for your consideration.**