



State of Rhode Island

Department of State | Office of the Secretary of State

Gregg M. Amore, *Secretary of State*

March 26, 2025

The Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr., Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

RE: In support of H5436 (Knight) An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Assault Weapons

Dear Chair Craven,

I write this letter in strong support of House Bill 5436, legislation that bans the possession, sale, and transfer of assault weapons. I thank Representative Knight for taking action and introducing this bill.

Last year, we succeeded in passing legislation requiring safe storage. This is a step in the right direction – but we have more work to do.

Access to military-style weapons has made shootings deadlier and has increased the tragedy that families and communities across the country are experiencing. Opponents of this bill and others like it often point to the Constitution as the basis of their opposition.

But in reality, the nation has banned the possession of fully automatic weapons since the 1930s. California's assault weapon ban has been in place since 1989. A federal law imposed a ten-year ban on assault-style weapons in 1994. These restrictions, thus far, have held up to judicial scrutiny.

This is not about taking away freedoms or rights. This is about ensuring that all Rhode Islanders maintain their rights to live, work, worship, and socialize safely in our state. This is about doing everything we can to prevent another tragedy that, in so many ways, has become all too commonplace in our country. This commonsense gun safety bill is critically needed in our state to keep our communities safe.

I urge the members of the Committee to support House Bill 5436, as we should do everything in our power to keep our state safe. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gregg M. Amore
Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
The Honorable Jason Knight