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From: tpotter312 <tpotter312@aol.com>
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To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Testimony in Opposition of HB5436

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Hello Chairman Craven and House Judiciary Committee Members,

My name is Timothy Potter and I'm a resident of Warwick, RI. I'm writing this Testimony in Opposition to bill HB5436. The proposed bill will not make Rhode Island a safer place to live. Statistics have shown that Rhode Island firearm related homicides in 2019 was 4.3 per 100,000 people, which was below the national average. In 2024 Rhode Island firearm related homicides were 4.8 per 100,000 people. Rhode Island was once again below the national average for firearm violence. However the the 2024 numbers were higher than 2019, despite firearm restriction laws being added in recent years.

In my home town of Warwick the police department has claimed to have over 70 police officer positions not filled. This low number of officers is not only a Warwick problem, it's a state wide problem. With the wide spread of violence being committed against Rhode Islanders at home and out in the community. It's is a clear indication that our police officers can not help the community when we need them the most. Now more than ever, it is up to each and every resident of Rhode Island to protect themselves. Passing bill HB5436 makes that objective impossible. The criminals do not follow common society laws, what will make them follow firearm related laws? The short answer is they will not. The criminals will continue to have a negative impact on society. The truth is the law abiding Rhode Island resident will follow the law. Unfortunately we will be the victims, because we follow all laws wether we like them or not.

I have lived in the state of Rhode Island for over 37 years. Based on the government's ideology of disarming law abiding citizens is not only not safe, but alarming. The idea that the government prefers us to be defenseless against treats at home and out in the community makes Rhode Island an unsafe place to live. If bill HB5436 is passed I am prepared to leave the State of Rhode Island and relocate to a state that will allow me the freedom to protect myself and the residents residing there. Many residents have also expressed these same feelings and are preparing to leave also.

All Rhode Island concealed carry permit holders have one thing in common. They all have to demonstrate proficiency with a firearm to obtain a permit. The only way to be proficient is to practice and train. We have learned in training not only how to use a firearm, but also how to be alert and avoid a bad situation in the first place. Law abiding citizens carrying a firearm are not vigilantes out looking for trouble. we are responsible citizens they want to enjoy the community and not live in fear.

Bill HB5436 will also hurt local small businesses. Due to the current status of the economy in Rhode Island, We can not afford to lose any more small businesses. The Bussiness motto is simple, to be successful you have to have a product or service to sell. The ban prevents that from happening. This ban will ultimately force many bussineses to close. The ban has such a huge negative economic impact, it will put people out of work and close many businesses. Rhode Island small business population is already low and weak, this ban will make it worse. The rapid decline in small business growth in is making Rhode Island a tougher state to live in.

It is the Committee's duty to make a decision on this assault weapon ban. However it is the duty of the committee to first follow the United States constitution to the letter. Secondly it is the duty of the committee to follow what the people want. We the people do not want to be victims of your own personal political agenda. Your agenda should be what we want, and we do not want more firearm restrictions.

I would like to thank the members of the Judiciary committee for taking the time to hear my testimony.

Respectfully Timothy Potter

Warwick Home owner
NRA member
NRA Firearm Instructor
Rhode Island conceal carry permit holder
USCCA Member
DEM residential fishing license holder

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone