

**Roberta DiMezza**

---

**From:** Thomas Hevner <thevner1@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 22, 2025 12:50 AM  
**To:** House Judiciary Committee  
**Subject:** OPPOSE HB 5443 - Firearms Watchlist

Hello Chairman Craven, and House Judiciary Committee Members,

I am writing this testimony in opposition of HB 5443.

Please Oppose:

HB 5443 - Allows individuals to voluntarily add themselves to a watchlist that would restrict their right to purchase or possess a firearm.

This law is unnecessary because individuals who recognize themselves as a threat or believe they are mentally unfit to own a firearm already have the option to seek psychiatric evaluation. If they are deemed unfit, they can be committed to an institution and are already prohibited from purchasing firearms. Additionally, these individuals are supposed to be reported to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). The real focus should be on ensuring states comply with the reporting of these individuals to NICS, rather than creating new, redundant laws.

Practical and Constitutional Concerns

Beyond its illegality under state law, this bill infringes on constitutional rights and disproportionately harms law-abiding citizens. Feature bans like flash hiders (which mitigate, not eliminate, muzzle flash—) or choke tubes (standard on shotguns) serve practical purposes, not criminal ones.

I urge you to oppose these unconstitutional bills. Partisan politics aside, Rhode Islanders deserve representation that respects their rights and the law.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thomas Hevner  
33 Cullen Hill Road, Lincoln, RI 02865  
401-450-9653