

Representative Cole,

You made the following statement today: Cole said she didn't think the charter changes would affect hunters. "If you've looked at these bills, I don't believe that they repeal the sportsmen's rights, so to speak, or that they have anything to do with hunting or fishing," Cole said.

Do you not get that when people refer to "The Sportsmen's Bill of Rights" that it is a nickname for 24 VSA 2295 ? If your charter changes were to pass, the state would be allowing local control with respect to possession and carrying of firearms (which 24 VSA 2295 prohibits). That then would set a precedent which would allow every other town in VT to set local laws concerning anything in 24 VSA 2295, including hunting, fishing, and trapping. So yes in the big picture this does have something to do with hunting and fishing.

If you take your narrow focused approach, as in your statement, the content in the charter changes have nothing to do with hunting or fishing and neither does Article 16 of the VT Constitution. What your charter changes do contain is language that would prevent a citizen from having the ability to adequately defend themselves, which is granted to them by Article 16.

So your charter changes are bad for the citizens of ALL OF VERMONT for both reasons stated above. I have included 24 VSA 2295 and Article 16 below in case you have never looked at them before.

Thank you,
Ben Broe
Burlington VT

§ 2295. Authority of municipal and county governments to regulate firearms, ammunition, hunting, fishing and trapping

Except as otherwise provided by law, no town, city or incorporated village, by ordinance, resolution or other enactment, shall directly regulate hunting, fishing and trapping or the possession, ownership, transportation, transfer, sale, purchase, carrying, licensing or registration of traps, firearms, ammunition or components of firearms or

ammunition. This section shall not limit the powers conferred upon a town, city or incorporated village under section 2291(8) of this title. The provisions of this section shall supersede any inconsistent provisions of a municipal charter. (Added 1987, No. 178 (Adj. Sess.), eff. May 9, 1988.)

Article 16. [Right to bear arms; standing armies; military power subordinate to civil]

That the people have a right to bear arms for the defence of themselves and the State--and as standing armies in time of peace