

Sent: Sunday, April 5, 2015 6:47:14 PM
To: Maxine Grad
Subject: Bob Williamson on S.141

I hope you're enjoying a relaxing Easter Sunday.

I sent you this note on Good Friday, asking you to support S.141, the bill to keep guns out of the wrong hands. Before I present what S.141 will do, I want to share a few words about me.

I grew up with firearms, I strongly believe in the freedoms guaranteed by both our Vermont Constitution and the U. S. Constitution. But I also believe we live in a nation of laws resting on both of those vital documents.

Twenty-seven years ago a deranged person went on a shooting rampage in my children's school in Winneka, Illinois, a sleepy suburb of Chicago. For nearly an hour I didn't know if my daughters Clare and Kate were one of the victims. Fortunately they were spared, but it was only dumb luck that saved them. S.141 makes sense and will make Vermonters safer.

First, S.141 will prohibit violent criminals from having guns. Vermont is the only state lacking a state law to do this. This flaw acts like a tax incentive to out-of-state drug traffickers bringing heroin into our communities. And it enables the most dangerous among us to have lethal force, exacerbating domestic situations.

Second, S.141 will require courts to report only the name of any individual judged a danger to themselves or others to the National Instant Background Check System. This safeguard will ensure that deeply disturbed folks won't be able to buy a gun legally.

Third, S.141 will invite gun shops to voluntarily post information on the risks of firearm suicide. New Hampshire has been doing this for nearly five years, and some 50 percent of their gun shops do this now. Given Vermont's high firearm suicide rate, this makes a lot of sense.

I'll be in the Statehouse this coming Tuesday, April 7th. I plan to be in cafeteria from about 8:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., then I'll visit various committees. I'll return to the cafeteria at 11:15 a.m. and remain there until 12:45 p.m. Please come by. I'd like to chat with you briefly. Thanks ahead of time. I deeply appreciate your service to all Vermonters.

Best,

Bob Williamson
GunSenseVT Volunteer & Board Member