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Vermont Article 16 Supporters

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Governor Peter Schumlin

As you know Vermont has a long and rich history of protecting individual civil rights. These rights include our right to keep and bear arms. Today we present you with over 7000 individually signed letters from voting Vermonters, who wish to keep our traditions and rights intact and in their present form.

These citizens are opposed to any new legislation, including S141. Collectively we that you oppose any new legislation including S141 in its entirety.

We are consistently one of, if not the safest state in the nation. This long standing record of safety and low crime rate is because we do respect individual rights as affirmed in the constitution of the state of Vermont.

Legislation is being presented to you to change these long standing laws and traditions. We are told that we must pass these laws to be in line with other states present legislation.

Vermont is not a legislative follower, we are a legislative leader. We have many laws dissimilar to our 49 sister states, many of those laws regard individual rights.

In fact many other states follow Vermont's legislative leads. This includes those of firearms rights. This year alone West Virginia and Kansas passed carry laws based on those of Vermont. Additionally Maine and New Hampshire have similar laws going through their legislature as you read this. In one year 12.5 % of the US states are changing their laws to mirror our highly successful existing laws.

So we have to ask, why would we change our laws to those of other states with significantly higher crime and accident rates? To us, such a proposition is counterintuitive.

The mental health portion of S141 in its present form will stigmatize a portion of our population for simply being ill. They will be added to a federal database. In the real world, no matter how well intentioned the legislation. Once you have been added to the federal system there is no real way to be released from that system. We all remember the late Senator Ted Kennedy being added to the TSA no fly list. He, even as a US senator was never able to be removed from that list. We have no reason to believe the list created under S141 will be any different for a common citizen. This legislation has not been researched and vetted to a high enough standard for enactment at this time.

We graciously thank you for protecting Vermont's long successful laws and traditions in the public forum. Your steadfast commitment to our rights and traditions is unparalleled.

We, as a group for the opportunity to converse with you personally on these matters.

Regards,

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