

Vote "No to S.55" , there are many reasons why this bill is A farce . For starters I strongly disagree that there was a problem for which legislation is needed at the state level . The opioid epidemic for example It's causing far more damage to the state of Vermont and perhaps is one of the biggest challenges to the future generations . Additionally Any legislation will be infringement on personal rights and liberties . Living in a free society comes at a cost , we would not tolerate random searches of peoples houses , nor would we tolerate crackdown on speech that most people would consider vile , it is in the spirit for which a no vote must be cast .

It would be a honor if you were able to afford me the opportunity , to further explain Why I believe in voting no is the only appropriate option and look forward to the opportunity To do such .

Dan

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Please pass along this message. I encourage Vermont to vote NO to S.55. Here are a few items to consider:

1. S.55 is a direct infringement on our rights to bear arms. Expect Supreme Court action if you vote yes.
2. This kind of act makes people go on a shopping spree for exactly what you're trying to remove before the act takes effect. Look at 2008. For several years after, AR-15s flew off the shelves faster than they could be manufactured due to looming gun control concerns. Same thing with magazines, ammo, and all components. Is this what you want? Too late, thanks to this proposed act, its already happening.
3. You cannot expect people to store their weapons as described in S.55. You cannot and will not enforce that.
4. The limitations on semi-auto firearms are nonsense. By the way, no American has been bayoneted in this country since 1865.

Thank you,
Evan Marchetti
Vermont resident

Good morning,

Could you please pass my message along to the House Judiciary Committee? Thank you.

Please vote No on S55, Vermont is the 2nd safest State in the country, we do not have a gun problem in Vermont, and do not need laws to further restrict the rights of law abiding citizens. Parts of this bill are in direct violation of the US Constitution's Second Amendment and Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution. Any support of this, or any other restrictions on my rights to own ANY type of firearms is an absolute breach of oath of office on the part of whoever supports and votes for this infringement on my Constitutional rights

Thank you,

Christopher LaFrance - Milton, VT

No to s55 . We don't need this in Vermont . As a registered voter in the town of Swanton I've never seen such a pile of Garbage put forth . Rest assured , that if this hog wash is passed many of our elected officials have in a sense turned on the good people of the sporting community and Vermont in general . They will all hear us loud and clear in November if this is voted into law .

Thank you , Russ Fortin

From: Christopher Parker

Subject: No on S.55

Date: March 15, 2018 at 1:45:56 AM GMT-4

To: mgrad@leg.state.vt.us, maxig@wcvr.com, mjohnson@leg.state.vt.us

As a native Vermonter, the way S.55 is written would paint me as a criminal for simply owning a firearm that has never, and will never be used to commit a crime.

It is extremely alienating that the firearm I choose to use for target practice and home protection, will make me a criminal. I cannot support the language used in S.55.

I am open to conversation regarding gun control in my state, but not by the proposed bill. I strongly encourage debate, before using this kind of bill that will ban firearms and magazines based on the fact for example, that a semi-automatic rifle has certain characteristics that make it no more dangerous in the wrong hands.

Background check enhancement is my proposal; not banning firearms and making common people criminals.

Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2018 10:20:38 PM

To: Maxine Grad; Mitzi Johnson

Subject: Bill S.55

Hello, my name is Ross Roberts, I am 21 years old and from Fair Haven, Vermont. I have always loved Vermont for it being an overall safe, healthy, and beautiful place. Although after hearing about bill s.55, and the thought of it getting getting passed makes me reconsider consider my views on Vermont. As a registered voter I feel as if I should have a say about Bill s.55, or any other bill for that matter. I am a hardworking man, the kind of person that built America to what it is. I say no to bill S.55 firmly. "We the people" is really starting to feel like "you the people"

Thank you, and I appreciate your time.

-Ross Roberts

Hello

Please vote NO on S.55.

I am a 9th generation Vermonter, grew up in a home with many guns and never had any issues. That was when parents were parents and not trying to be their children's best friend. We respected people and in return you were respected. My favorite hobby is shooting my bench gun and when I was younger and physically able enjoyed hunting deer. At this point I enjoy a good venison meal. Have always been a law abiding person and feel very discriminated against by these proposed useless gun laws. These laws are not going to stop mentally ill people from going off the deep end. Agencies and computer systems do not seem to be communicating and getting information to our law enforcement personal. That would be a good place to start.

If you feel people aren't old enough to purchase a gun until age 21 then you would have to move the age to drive, vote, join the military, and drink alcohol to 21 also. If you aren't mentally capable to purchase a firearm then of course you are not mentally capable to drive a vehicle, vote, join the military and drink alcohol.

We have a small family owned motel in VT since 1953 which I work at and I can tell you I am not concerned about someone coming in and robbing us with a gun, what I am concerned about is the people that come in and are trying to find a place to sell drugs from. Vermont has a major drug problem and that needs to be addressed but instead

Montpelier focuses and spends time and money on a non problem (guns) because people move into VT from NY etc and want to change things to their way of thinking.

It is time for our representatives to stand up for the people and use your common sense.

Thank you for you time.

Regards,

Ann Merrill-Griswold

Date: March 14, 2018 at 5:29:24 PM EDT

To: mgrad@leg.state.vt.us, maxjg@wcvr.com

Cc: phil@philscott.org

Subject: S55 and Future Vermont Gun Laws

Good Afternoon Madam Chair,

I am writing to you in regards to the recent introduction of the S55 amendment and the future gun laws in our State. I am very concerned and, frankly, upset with recent statements made by our Governor and this new introduction of S55.

I am a native Vermonter. I was born here and have called the Green Mountains my home for the last 34 years. I have served proudly as a member of the Vermont Army National Guard since the age of 17. I still serve proudly today.

It has not always been easy living here in Vermont, especially after becoming a homeowner. I have had the opportunity of traveling to many wonderful States in this Country, states that don't have to endure the same challenges as we do in Vermont. The unpredictable winter weather, growing restrictions and requirements, proposed taxes and one of the highest costs of living in the Country have often made me think of relocating. A few weeks ago our Governor posted a video about how our State continues to lose residents between the ages of 18 and 35. He identified this as a problem, a problem he wants to resolve. I agreed with him and was relieved to see someone take a direct approach at a problem, instead of trying to hide it. Unfortunately after seeing that video I am even more angered by his recent statements about gun control and the suggested laws that the State should enact. Our State has consistently had some of the lowest crime and murder rates in the Nation, while at the same time having some of the least restrictive gun laws. We often share the title of "Safest State in America" with New Hampshire and Maine. Two states who also have very few gun restrictions.

It is no secret that the recent tragedy in Florida is what has sparked all of these "new" ideas and our Governor's recent position. But even that does not make sense, as Florida voted NO in favor of stricter gun laws after the recent attack. And instead they are looking at arming their teachers. So why is it that

we, as a state, would considering adjusting our laws because of a tragedy that occurred thousands of miles away in a state that has a very different populous and way of life than we do? Furthermore, why would we consider changing our laws in a manner opposite of a state that had such a tragedy occur? The simple answer is that there is really no logical reason to do so.

In addition (and this is why I am even more angered after watching the Governor's video), I am very sure that an increase in our gun laws will only increase the number of hard working, middle class Vermonters who will leave our State, the very opposite of what Governor Scott said he wanted to accomplish. The reason I am sure is because I am one of those residents. I have spent half of my life serving this Country and our State. I will not continue to serve a State, invest in a State and raise a family in a State that thinks it is okay to infringe on our Constitutional Rights.

I sincerely hope that you have similar views and can agree with me that the gun is not the problem we are facing in this Country. It stems much deeper than that to the way we are raising our children and how we are handling mental health. So I ask you to please vote NO to S55 and any other additional gun laws that are introduced.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and hear my concerns,

V/r

Kevin Wesolow
Barton, Vermont

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To whom it may concern, I write you to express my opposition to s 55 and the amendment s contained within. Vt has responsible law abiding gun owners with rights. This bill is over reactive and is a solution looking for a problem.

Law makers should be investing in mental health programs and measures to protect our schools not passing knee-jerk legislation like our neighbors in NY.

Regards, Brian Connaughton

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Please Vote, No to S.55 .Passing laws that would restrict Law - Abiding gun ownership in Vermont, will do little to stop a Mentally ill, or Hateful person from harming other's. There must be other ways of addressing these issues so both sides can come away from this Legislative session, knowing we did what was Right, and True. Thank you for your time. Sincerely Jeffrey Grimes, West Rutland. Vt.
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Hi folks, This is Aaron Kyle (tax paying, hard working, law abiding, voter from Peacham).

Please do everything possible to squash S.55.

Martin LaLond's Amendments are completely unreasonable.

Thank you, Aaron

Our state should not be governed by laws which make us "feel good" but rather laws that are based on facts and logic. Please convey to our legislators that they should NOT APPROVE S-55.

Kerry O'Hara
Shrewsbury, VT

14 March, 2018

Mr. Bailey,

If you would be so kind as to pass my message on to the members of House Judiciary Committee soonest.

This message is in regards to Representative Martin LaLonde's proposed amendment to S.55.

Judiciary Committee Members:

This is Vermont. Not New York, not New Jersey, nor Massachusetts, Connecticut or Illinois. Not even my original state of Michigan. This is Vermont.

This badly researched, poorly thought out amendment, if passed, will in theory make criminals of nearly all Vermont gun owners, tens of thousands of decent, hard working Vermonters, who are now all law abiding citizens. That's because nearly every Vermont gun owner owns a semi-automatic rifle or pistol, usually given to him or her, long ago, by a parent, grandparent, older brother or sister. It's tradition.

Vermont gun owners have been wisely using semi-automatic rifles and pistols, with their associated magazines, customized stocks and attachments for more than a century. Vermont currently has the least restrictive guns laws in the country. Vermont has one of the highest rates of gun ownership in the nation. And Vermont is still the safest state in the United States. This law is not about gun safety, it's about politics. This law and proposed amendments are practically unenforceable, intrinsically intrusive, and totally unnecessary.

I respectfully request that the members of the Vermont House Judiciary Committee vote "NO" to S.55 and all amendments to it. It is not needed, and it is not Vermont.

Stephen M. Truhan
LTC, US Army, (Ret'd)
Clarendon, Vermont

Please say no to s 55. Thanks for your time. Cahrles Holbrook. Brandon vt

As a sportsman, gun owner and registered voter in the State of Vermont, please pass on I do NOT support any new gun legislation and I say NO to S.55

Respectfully,
Michael J Southworth

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This is out of control. Penalizes every duck hunter and law abiding shooter. Vote NO to it. Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

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> On Feb 28, 2018, at 8:07 AM, Drake <fdadoc@aol.com> wrote:>

> I am a law abiding gun owner and agree with s221. Please don't change or amend it from its current draft. Drake Battista

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Advise the chief of the Kabal, in Montpelier, Martin Lalonde, that his and Bloomberg's S.55 Bill is unconstitutional under Vermont 's Article 16 State Constitution. I'm sure he's read it throughout because his oath of office requires to uphold and defend same. NO, NO, NO, and NO to S.55!!!

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I oppose s.55. We have enough gun control laws on the books. Secure the schools and follow up to handle the mentally ill. Thank u Harold waters n.benn vt.

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From: Steven Board

Subject: 8 facts about gun violence in The US

I know politicians are loathe to let facts get in the way of their agenda, but they prove the point that Vermont doesn't need any new gun laws that will only affect law abiding citizens and not criminals who don't obey the laws anyway.

1. America is relatively safe, and the trend is toward becoming safer.

- According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, violent crime has been [declining steadily](#) since the early 1990s.
- The 2011 homicide rate was [almost half](#) of the rate in 1991, and according to the Pew Research Center, the 2013 gun-related death rate was [half](#) of the rate in 1993.
- The number of nonfatal firearm crimes committed in 2011 was [one-sixth the number](#) committed in 1993.
- In the past few years, there have been minor increases in certain types of violent crimes, mainly in large metropolitan areas. However, these increases are nowhere near [those seen in the 1990s](#) and are largely related to [gang activity](#).
- It should be remembered that it takes at least three to five years of data to show true trend lines. It appears that the collective homicide toll for America's 50 largest cities [decreased modestly](#) in 2017 after two consecutive years of increases.

2. The principal public safety concerns are suicides and illegally owned handguns.

- According to the Pew Research Center, almost two-thirds of America's annual gun deaths are [suicides](#). Since 1981, when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention began publishing data, gun suicides have outnumbered gun homicides. In 2010 alone, 19,392 Americans used guns to kill themselves.
- Most gun-related crimes are carried out with [illegally owned firearms](#)—as much as 80 percent according to some estimates.
- The FBI's Uniform Crime Reports prove that the overwhelming majority of gun-related homicides are [perpetrated with handguns](#), with rifles of any kind accounting for less than 3 percent of gun-related homicides. In 2013, 5,782 murders were committed by killers who used a handgun, compared to 285 committed by killers who used a rifle. The same holds true for 2012 (6,404 to 298); 2011 (6,251 to 332); 2010 (6,115 to 367); and 2009 (6,501 to 351).
- More people are stabbed to death every year than are murdered with rifles.
- A person is more likely to be bludgeoned to death with a blunt object or beaten to death with hands and feet than to be murdered with a rifle.

3. A small number of factors significantly increase the likelihood that a person will be a victim of a gun-related homicide.

- Where do you live? Murders in the United States are very concentrated. According to the Crime Prevention Research Center, [over 50 percent of murders](#) occur in 2 percent of the nation's 3,142 counties. Moreover, gun-related homicides are heavily concentrated in certain neighborhoods within those counties: 54 percent of U.S. counties had zero murders in 2014.
- Who is your partner? According to a recent scholarly article in the Hastings Law Journal, people recently or currently involved in an [abusive intimate relationship](#) are much more likely to be victims of gun-related homicide than is the rest of the population, especially if the [abuser possesses firearms](#).
- Are you in a gang? According to the Department of Justice's National Gang Center, particularly in urban areas, [significant percentages](#) of gun-related homicides (15 percent to 33 percent) are [linked with gang](#) and drug activity. Gang-related homicides are [more likely to involve firearms](#) than non-gang-related homicides are.
- Are you a male between 15 and 34? The majority of standard gun murder victims are men between the ages of 15 and 34. Although black men make up roughly 7 percent of the population, they account for [almost two-thirds](#) of gun murder victims every year.
- [Women and children](#) are more likely to be the victims of mass shootings and homicide-suicide shootings than they are to be the victims of a "typical" gun-related homicide.

4. The perpetration of gun-related murders is often carried out by predictable people.

- According to studies, almost all mass public shooters have [extensive histories of mental health issues](#) (whether delusional/psychiatric or depression/anger), [disturbing behaviors, or interpersonal violence](#).
- Intimate partner conflict and domestic violence history [are major risk factors](#) for homicide-suicides, even for those not involving intimate partners.
- Especially in urban areas, [a small number of recidivist violent offenders](#) are typically responsible for the majority of gun violence.

5. Higher rates of gun ownership are not associated with higher rates of violent crime.

- Switzerland and Israel have [much higher gun ownership rates](#) than the United States but experience far fewer homicides and have much lower violent crime rates than many European nations with strict gun control laws.
- While some will argue that the guns carried by Swiss and Israeli citizens are technically “owned” by the government in most cases, this does little to negate the fact that many citizens in those countries have ready access to firearms.
- Canada is ranked 12th in the world for the number of civilian-owned guns per capita and reports one of the world’s lower homicide rates—but even then, some provinces have [higher homicide rates than U.S. states](#) with less restrictive laws and higher rates of gun ownership have.
- Although many gun control advocates have noted that “right to carry” states tend to experience slight increases in violent crime, other studies have noted the [opposite effect](#).
- [Higher rates of concealed carry permit holders](#) are even more strongly associated with reduction in violent crime than are right-to-carry states. The probable reason for this is that right-to-carry studies often include “open carry” states, which have not been shown to correlate with more people actually carrying or even owning firearms. Rates of concealed carry permit holders are better indicators of the number of people who actually possess and carry firearms within a given population.
- Further, as with most correlations, there are many other factors that can account for increases in concealed carry permits—including the fact that people who live in already dangerous neighborhoods seek out means of self-defense. The Huffington Post noted that the rate of concealed carry permit requests in Chicago [has soared](#) in recent years after the city loosened restrictions, in large part, according to the Chicago Tribune, because [law-abiding residents](#) are increasingly worried about rising rates of violent crime in the city.
- The rate of gun ownership is higher among whites than it is among African-Americans, but the murder rate among African-Americans is significantly higher than the rate among whites.
- Similarly, the rate of gun ownership is higher in rural areas than in urban areas, but urban areas experience higher murder rates.

6. There is no clear relationship between strict gun control legislation and homicide or violent crime rates.

- The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence [ironically makes this clear with its ratings](#) for states based on gun laws. “Gun freedom” states that score poorly, like New Hampshire, Vermont, Idaho, and Oregon, have some of the lowest homicide rates. Conversely, “gun control-loving” states that received high scores, like Maryland and Illinois, experience some of the nation’s highest homicide rates.
- The Crime Prevention Research Center notes that, if anything, the data indicate that countries with high rates of gun ownership [tend to have lower homicide rates](#)—but this is only a correlation, and many factors do not necessarily support a conclusion that high rates of gun ownership cause the low rates of homicide.
- Homicide and firearm homicide rates in Great Britain [spiked in the years](#) immediately following the imposition of severe gun control measures, despite the fact that most developed countries continued to experience a downward trend in these rates. This is also pointed out by noted criminologist John Lott in his book “The War on Guns.”

- Similarly, Ireland’s homicide rates spiked in the years immediately following the country’s 1972 gun confiscation legislation.
- Australia’s National Firearms Act appears to have had [little effect on suicide and homicide rates](#), which were falling before the law was enacted and continued to decline at a statistically unremarkable rate compared to worldwide trends.
- According to research compiled by Lott and highlighted in his book “The War on Guns,” Australia’s armed and unarmed robbery rates both increased markedly in the five years immediately following the National Firearms Act, despite the general downward trend experienced by other developed countries.
- Great Britain has some of the strictest gun control laws in the developed world, but the violent crime rate for homicide, rape, burglary, and aggravated assault is [much higher](#) than that in the U.S. Further, approximately [60 percent of burglaries](#) in Great Britain occur while residents are home, compared to just 13 percent in the U.S., and British burglars admit to targeting occupied residences because they are more likely to find wallets and purses.
- It is difficult to compare homicide and firearm-related murder rates across international borders because countries use different methods to determine which deaths “count” for purposes of violent crime. For example, since 1967, Great Britain has [excluded from its homicide counts](#) any case that does not result in a conviction, that was the result of dangerous driving, or in which the person was determined to have acted in self-defense. All of these factors are counted as “homicides” in the United States.

7. Legally owned firearms are used for lawful purposes much more often than they are used to commit crimes or suicide.

- In 2013, President Barack Obama ordered the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to assess existing research on gun violence. The report, compiled by the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council, [found](#) (among other things) that firearms are used defensively [hundreds of thousands](#) of times every year.
- According to the CDC, “self-defense can be an important crime deterrent.” Recent [CDC reports](#) acknowledge that studies directly assessing the effect of actual defensive uses of guns have found “consistently lower injury rates among gun-using crime victims compared with victims who used other self-protective strategies.”
- Semi-automatic rifles (such as the AR-15) are [commonly used as self-defense weapons](#) in the homes of law-abiding citizens because they are easier to control than handguns, are more versatile than handguns, and offer the advantage of up to 30 rounds of protection. Even Vox has [published stories](#) defending the use of the AR-15.
- AR-15s have been used to save lives on many occasions, including:
 - [Oswego, Illinois](#) (2018)—A man with an AR-15 intervened to stop a neighbor’s knife attack and cited the larger weapon’s “intimidation factor” as a reason why the attacker dropped the knife.
 - [Catawba County, North Carolina](#) (2018)—A 17-year-old successfully fought off three armed attackers with his AR-15.
 - [Houston, Texas](#) (2017)—A homeowner survived a drive-by shooting by defending himself with his AR-15.
 - [Broken Arrow, Oklahoma](#) (2017)—A homeowner’s son killed three would-be burglars with an AR-15 (the man was later deemed to have acted in [justifiable self-defense](#)).

- [Ferguson, Missouri](#) (2014)—African-American men protected a white man’s store from rioters by standing outside armed with AR-15s.
- [Texas](#) (2013)—A 15-year-old boy used an AR-15 during a home invasion to save both his life and that of his 12-year-old sister.
- [Rochester, New York](#) (2013)—Home intruders fled after facing an AR-15.

8. Concealed carry permit holders are not the problem, but they may be part of the solution.

- Lott found that, as a group, concealed carry permit holders are [some of the most law-abiding people](#) in the United States. The rate at which they commit crimes generally and firearm crimes specifically is between one-sixth and one-tenth of that recorded for police officers, who are themselves committing crimes at a fraction of the rate of the general population.
- Between 2007 and 2015, murder rates dropped 16 percent and violent crime rates dropped 18 percent, even though the percentage of adults with concealed carry permits rose by 190 percent.
- Regression estimates show a significant association between increased permit ownership and a drop in murder and violent crime rates. [Each percentage point increase](#) in rates of permit-holding is associated with a roughly 2.5 percent drop in the murder rate.
- Concealed carry permit holders are often “[the good guy with a gun](#),” even though they rarely receive the attention of the national media. Concealed carry permit holders were credited with saving multiple lives in:
 - [Rockledge, Florida \(2017\)](#);
 - [Antioch, Tennessee \(2017\)](#);
 - [Arlington, Texas \(2017\)](#);
 - [Lyman, South Carolina \(2016\)](#);
 - [Winton Hills, Ohio \(2015\)](#);
 - [Conyers, Georgia \(2015\)](#);
 - [New Holland, South Carolina \(2015\)](#);
 - [Chicago, Illinois \(2015\)](#);
 - [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania \(2015\)](#);
 - [Darby, Pennsylvania \(2015\)](#);
 - [Chicago, Illinois \(2014\)](#);
 - [Portland, Oregon \(2014\)](#);
 - [Spartanburg, South Carolina \(2012\)](#).

I am disgusted and horrified that our state politicians suddenly feel that our constitutional rights are up for a popular vote to solve a non-existent problem in Vermont. Our state is always at the bottom of the list for violent crime and out of state interests are trying to impose their gun control agenda on Vermont. I've been personally threatened by a mentally unstable person WITH A MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY, who had a

firearm, and threatened to shoot me. I was questioned when I reported it as to how I knew they had a mental health history, NOT the person that made the threats! If you REALLY want to do something that is actually effective, KEEP MENTALLY UNSTABLE PEOPLE FROM GETTING FIREARMS! DON'T INFRINGE ON MY LAW ABIDING CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS. Criminals will not comply with any feel good laws you may want to pass. They will not bear the burden nor the expense to comply with your gun registry scheme. If the numerous government agencies all failed to prevent the shootings in Florida, then why should anyone in Vermont put their trust in politicians to correctly address the real issues behind gun violence, namely the mentally unstable person pulling the trigger?

As a law-abiding Vermont gun owner, military veteran and your constituent, I am writing to express my strong opposition to any new gun control that would only impact law-abiding gun owners. Punishing law-abiding gun owners for the acts of criminals will do nothing to advance public or school safety. The gun control bills currently being proposed in Montpelier do nothing to address the underlying mental health and behavioral problems that desperately need to be addressed. Please stand strong in support of the Second Amendment and oppose all gun control schemes.

Please support and focus on legislation to protect our schools and our school communities, as well as fix our broken mental health reporting system.

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We do not need more gun control. We need to enforce the laws we have already. The reason the Florida shooting took place was because of law enforcement not doing their job. Just like the school threats we have been having around here on our school system. Stop slapping them on the hand. Vote no on S-55. Thank you.

Lee Domina
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Please pass onto the House Judiciary Committee that Louis M. and Barbara A. Andreotta, Marlboro, Windham County DO NOT support Bill H.422.

Please remember that you are supposed to protect our rights, not take them away. For decades Vermont has been considered one of the safest states in the US. Why would you want to take away our rights now? Please ensure that my children and grand children will have the same rights and privileges paid for in the blood of my uncles and cousins in all wars since the Revolution.

Do not sell out to Bloomberg!!!

Thank you!

Louis M. and Barbara A Andreotta

No, to S.55 gun control bill. The fact is simple, in that the amended to the bill. The ban on high capacity magazines, and the rest by the South Burlington rep. Is simply not the direction for this bill to go. There was a decent amount of support for the bill in the Northeast Kingdom from what I had gathered, until these over reaching, amended parts where added. A ban on any type of firearms or accessories is simply feel good legislation. This will do nothing to curb anything, when it comes to mass murders. It is only making many rural Vermonters very angry, and upset with our state government. There is no difference in a shooter using one gun with a magazine with 40 rounds of ammunition, and one with the same gun and 4 magazines with 10 rounds in each. It only takes a second to replenish the magazine, and even more effective for them to keep topping off the weapon. Even when listening to audio from these school shootings you can clearly hear that there is never more then 6-7 shots in a rapid succession, and most often even slow fire, then a pause of at least 3 seconds. Not only that, not one person I know of can rapid fire a firearm through a 30 round magazine, then instantly be able to load another and do the same over again. Your finger dose get tired really fast pulling a six pound trigger, and the fire rate can not be held up. Sorry these are not real assault weapons by the real definition, kind of makes me sick when I hear them called that, and makes anybody using that term seem like a idiot to anybody who really knows the difference. I will not go into further details about why this ban bill is a bad idea, such as the black market that will be big and lucrative if it goes through. From importing the (if passed) very valuable magazines and weapons from other states, that will sell for five times their value at least. Remove these terribly useless feel good add ons and let's start over with the original bill as it was and make some meaningful change. No to s.55

No to S.55

No to S.55

Thank you Brandon Guillette

Derby Vermont

Dear Legislatures,

Yes, emotions run deep, very deep. I do not know one gun owner or sportsman who is not filled on emotion and sadness from these murderess people. I have 3 Grandchildren ages 6, 8 and 10, and I want them protected. But at this point I am not sure the Vermont law makers can provide what is needed. We are being attacked like everyone of us had a part in the latest events.

The Second Amendment reads: "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

No where is there anything about muskets in that wording. The last part states "shall not be infringed". That is very clear on wording. Remember the 2nd amendment is a Right not a privilege.

Just like the 1st, that did not say anything about typewriters, Dictaphones, phones, computers, Social Media and on and on.

Legislative Action, this is controlled from out of state monies, out of state originations. Out of state people. The gun owners are Vermonters, plan and simple. We make phone calls and send e-mails and show up at the State House. We are the good and honest people of the Great State of Vermont and want to keep it that way. You stated about Vermont's low crime rate and traditional rural culture. Vermont is not Connecticut or Florida or Las Vegas. The recent terrible events have an impact on everyone, including the People.

What now, the support back ground checks, that is good because every gun purchaser now goes through a back-ground check, even at gun shows. S.221 was a Bill compromised between the Senate and Gun Owners of Vermont, then looked what happened to it. That was everyone working on a solution TOGETHER. Gun Owners cannot buy high powered military weapons unless you join then you get to use one for nothing.

Gun Rights, no one wants to disarm the people, hunters will remain free, citizens retain the right to protect themselves. First off citizens already have the right to protect themselves. Hunters will remain free, they are already free.

Article 16. [Right to bear arms; standing armies; military power subordinate to civil] That the people have a right to bear arms for the defense of themselves and the State--and as standing armies in time of peace are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up; and that the military should be kept under strict subordination to and governed by the civil power.

I posted Article 16 of The Vermont Constitution above, just as a reminder.

All semi-auto rifles are just that. Hunters are free to use whatever type of rifle for hunting. The limit for hunting is 5 rounds. Citizens can protect themselves with any firearm they choose, they have a standard magazine capacity or a revolver capacity. What the firearm is designed to hold is standard capacity.

No bans on firearms or magazine capacity, plain and simple. Universal Background Checks will destroy the Training of Firearms for Women and Vermont Hunter Education

Thank You

Timothy Ordway
Bennington

As a women from VT,
I want to protect my rights to keep and beat all fire arms.
I say NO to S.55

Sheryl Lavigne
110 Fontaine Dr
Georgia, VT. 05468

March 17, 2018

Subject: Facts and opinion of why S.55 is seriously flawed legislation

Representative LaLonde:

It seems that there is a regular perennial drive to introduce new gun legislation in Vermont. Unfortunately there is little research and foundation justifying the pursuit of such legislation. Further, the empirical data and facts certainly question why there would be any such introduction of more oppressive gun laws in a state that has for years either been the safest state in the nation or runner-up to that honor.

The regular purveyors of gun legislation in Vermont like to espouse the thinking that Vermont has "lax gun laws" and that there is a need to tighten them significantly. They like to compare Vermont to states like NY, MA, NJ and CA who have extreme gun laws and repressive restrictions. The problem is that they fallaciously equate these restrictions as a "winning combination" that should be the epitome and model of what gun laws should be nationwide. The anti-gun Gifford Foundation gives those four states an **A+** for having gun laws that are excessively harsh and restrictive. They do not give a grade for reduced or low crime rates compared to other states. If the foundation gave a grade for the horrific crime rates in those four states, they would have had to give them an **"F"** for their dismal record!

What they forget to mention is the fact that violent crime rates in all four of those states with oppressive laws are nearly **4 times higher than Vermont!** Additionally, In the past year California has seen a +16% jump in their crime rate. It is a convenient fact to forget if you are pushing/selling more gun laws for purely political reasons.

You indicate that you were asked to ban "assault weapons" by voters at the polls on Town Meeting Day. That is a thinly veiled reason to introduce such controversial and constitutionally challenged legislation. Crime statistics and other data don't even remotely justify causing this level of turmoil

and consternation in the legislature and within the state. In fact, I consider it shameful and wasteful when there are so many legitimate issues facing Vermonters that require focused legislative attention.

Where is the same drive and concern for hardening schools? That is the first line of defense and from there you work backwards to eliminate credible sources of threats. Where is the legislative initiative to identify and take action on the driving causes of these shootings, i.e. mental illness, drug addiction, social media, bullying, etc.? In my opinion, it is because you find it a lot easier to go after an inanimate object, like a gun, rather than having to make very difficult decisions that will change many aspects of our society.

Facts you must consider:

- There are approximately 100K gun owners in Vermont; just 8K less than “pot smokers” per Lt. Gov. Zuckerman’s claim in 2017
- We hold the stature of being one of the safest states in the nation (Currently 2nd) ○ Maine and NH have gun laws that mirror Vermont and are always on par with similar low crime rates, remarkably better than the other 47 states.

- It is estimated that 70% of all Vermont homes have a firearm in the residence
- There has been only one shooting with an AR-15 that I could find, in VT. That was Carl Drega, in 1997. ○ The horrific killing of four souls several years ago by Jodi Herring was with a stolen bolt action rifle, not a semi-auto.
 - Three recent notable murders/attacks involved acid, ball bat and a meat cleaver. Not a firearm.
 - The former Burlington police chief, several years ago, said he couldn’t remember a single incident of an assault weapon ever being used or displayed in a crime in the city.

- It is estimated that there are 3.4 million “AR” rifles in the U.S. ○ AR’s are now recognized as the most common firearm in America
 - Due to their modularity and ability to be configured for specific shooting sports they are extremely popular. It’s no different than getting a new IPAD, cell phone, faster MIPS on your internet service, etc. Shooters appreciate improved technology as well.
 - They are gaining favor across the country as a hunting rifle in both the AR 15 and AR 10 configuration. They are rugged, highly reliable and durable.

- AR firearms have been sold to the public for over 50 years, since 1964
- **FBI violent crime statistics show that for the past 5 years, rifles, on average, were used less than 300 times per year. AR style firearms make up only about 1% of those rifles used. ○ Based on FBI statistics, only 0.0000882353% of all AR’s in the U.S. are used in violent crimes annually (2012-2016) In Vermont it was 0.0%.** That is certainly no justification to “ban” them or the magazines used in them.
 - In comparison, fists were used 5% or 678 times, knives 12% or 1576 times, blunt objects 3.5% or 464 times out of the average 13,246 murders per year.

If you are responding to the latest mass shooting in Florida and the subsequent student demonstrations, you must put them in proper perspective.

- The Florida shooting was preventable. 39 visits to the shooter’s home by police. Tips to the FBI three times were not followed up. Students and administration were well aware of this individual. This was a failure and breakdown of our law enforcement and our schools. **Not guns.**
- It appears that a number of anti-gun groups, i.e., Gifford’s Foundation, Bloomberg’s Everytown, Gun Sense Vermont, Brady Campaign, and others are helping with funding, organization, etc. with some of these demonstrations across the country. **What a tragedy that these shameless groups are politicizing and exploiting these impressionable youths** to further their agenda.

• **We are now hearing these students denigrate the constitution and the 2nd Amendment** as out dated and no longer valid. They are saying that they and their safety trump the constitution. This doesn't bode well for this country's future.

It is incumbent, as law makers, that you look at all facts and current law before you propose any unnecessary legislation that infringes on the rights of law abiding citizens to purchase and own firearms.

I note that in your proposal you would require guns to be securely stored. You need to read the SCOTUS decision in Heller Vs. D.C (2008) where D.C's law requiring guns to be "locked-up" or disassembled for safety was struck down. The decision stated that such a law violated the 2nd Amendment by inhibiting a gun owner to 'immediate' access to a firearm for self-defense.

I was amused by your description (Burlington Free Press) of an "assault weapon" to include any pistol that has a "pistol grip" and/or a detachable magazine. It is reasonable to believe the term "pistol grip" comes from the fact that a pistol indeed does have a "pistol grip". Are you suggesting that you would outlaw every semi-auto pistol? It is this lack of knowledge and not using real and demonstrative statistics to introduce a bill that will affect tens-of-thousands of Vermonters for no valid reason.

S.55 is a flawed bill. It has no justification for advancement and needs to be stopped in the House Judiciary. It, once again, is being pushed/endorsed by a severe partisan group, **Gun Sense Vermont**. They have never seen a gun bill they didn't like. They continue to spew out emotional, skewed and flawed data that is often accepted without challenge. Two times now, 2015/2018, **1200 gun owners** came out on a cold winter night in protest of similar legislation. **Only 50 anti-gun** supporters were there in 2015 and about 120 this February. On Tuesday night there were 3 protesters who showed up at the statehouse for the Federation mixer. **THAT SHOULD TELL YOU SOMETHING!**

I ask that you stop all further action on **S.55** or any firearm bill other than S.221 that has the backing of sportsmen and gun owners.

Bruce

Bruce Lindner
90 Hillcrest Lane

.....
This bill S.55 will do nothing to address public safety. It will only impact law-abiding gun owners. Vermont is annually one of the safest states in the country, and this solution in search of a problem is being advanced in the Green Mountain State by deep pocketed, out-of-state anti-gun groups.

Oppose S.55 and any gun control bills.

Linda Timson
Lunenburg Vt

.....
Reg Hathorn

I oppose this UNCONSTITUTIONAL legislation.

And I am making financial contributions to Organizations that oppose this bill.

.....
Good evening

I am a Vermont resident who is respectfully requesting that our legislators rethink adding new gun legislation.

I am an avid outdoorsman (woman). I began hunting with my dad when I was a little girl. I now spend hunting seasons with my husband and two sons carrying on our family tradition.

My rifle was handed down to me from my Dad who got it from his dad. I hope to one day hand this rifle down to my son. My worry is that legislation is trying to be passed to prevent me from doing so.

Believe me when I say that I am deeply saddened by the tragic shootings that have occurred in our country. But I don't believe that more gun laws would have prevented them.

We need to focus on enforcing the laws we have, locking up criminals and not letting them back on the streets to offend again. We also need to mandate that those with mental illness are denied access to firearms.

Legislators need to understand that these laws will only make it more difficult for law abiding citizens to purchase a firearm.

I think that every VT school should only have 1 entrance that had an armed guard at that entrance. All other doors can only be used as exits. I can already hear you say, 'how will we pay for that.' If we stop all of the freebies going out to those in the State who don't deserve it that would free up the funds.

Those that want to inflict harm on others, break into stores or even break into my own home are not purchasing firearms at your local gun store or even at a gun show. They are flying under the radar getting guns on the black market, stealing, etc. Also, the sensationalism that occurs in the media is making these shooters out to be 'heroes'. They are getting the attention that perhaps they always wanted. Other disturbed individuals see this and think this is a way to get noticed.

I will close by saying that law abiding citizens should be able to enjoy the freedoms granted to us so many years ago. We should be able to protect our homes that we have worked so very hard to build. Most importantly we should be able to defend ourselves and our family at all costs. We should not have to pay the price for the wrong doings of others.

Thank you in advance for really thinking about the decision you are about to make and what will it really do to protect our citizens.

Sandy Thomas
Shrewsbury, VT

As a responsible gun owner and law abiding citizen I respectfully ask you oppose s.55 which is in committee. And all other attacks on our 2nd amendment rights.

Respectfully , Henry Gagne Barre, VT

Senators & Representatives,

I respectfully request that you very strongly oppose S55

Vermont is one of the safest states in the county and does not need to criminalize a large portion of its citizens by importing NY gun laws.

Sincerely,

Hobart C. "Hobie" Tomlinson

6136 Main Road,

Huntington, VT 05462

(802) 363-3411

Dear Representative LaLonde,

Your actions in the Legislature this week have spurred me to offer a small amount of commentary as it relates to firearms, particularly those which you decidedly seem to wish to ban within our state borders.

Let me first begin by saying that I am a native-born Vermonter and registered Democrat in the Burlington Area. I usually believe that the values espoused by the left party tend to be more reasonable, inclusive, level-headed, and agreeable. There is one topic, however, where that is not the case. This is obviously when we turn towards firearms and the possession of them by otherwise law-abiding citizens.

The amendments you proposed this week are blatantly under-informed, dangerous, unconstitutional, and will negatively impact a disproportionate number of innocent members of our communities and state population. It would be great to have a line-by-line discussion of why your amendments are not the proper course of action in our state, but unfortunately I doubt you have the time nor the interest to read and have such a discussion.

In the matter of unconstitutionality, Chapter 1, Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution is below:

"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 are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up; and that the military should be kept under strict subordination to and governed by the civil power." (Source: legislature.vermont.gov)

Nothing good would result from your amendments. They would not decrease crime, make citizens safer, improve the overall quality of life here. More laws are not the answer in many cases.

If you do wish to continue the discussion, I would be delighted to do so. There is an unfortunate emotional level to most gun control measures, which I fear clouds the judgement of both sides and quickly descends into a yelling match of sorts. I strive to avoid that descent and only stick to asking the right questions, talking in frank terms, and listening to the real reasons.

I really want to support you and the VT Democratic party, but with an action such as yours I am afraid that you will not be getting my vote come election time.

All the best,

Harrison

Harrison C. Gatos

NRG Systems

Technical Services Team

Rope Access Technician L3

802.734.6516

.....
180317

No on S.55!

Those who are using high school students to cover their tracks should be abashed by the fact that they are both releasing and training future voters to do American politics in the streets rather than in the Legislature.

Deliberative lawmaking is NOT about making noise, making demands, marching and shouting. Such 17-minute walkouts of school children ought to have refashioned by responsible teachers as at least two-sided discussions inside their school houses.

Russ Williams

As a U.S. and Vermont citizen a sportsman and member of our military I ask the you vote No to S.55 and the Nazi style legislation proposed by Rep. Martin Lalonde aimed at stripping the Constitutional rights of good law abiding Vermonters.

Thank You,
John M. Allard

Sir,

Everyone needs to vote against the NY style gun laws suggested in S.55. Please inform them all that I am vehemently against this bill.

Thank you,

Mike Charter

I oppose S.55. VT. VT has the least amount of gun laws and gun crime rate in our country. Why change what is already working?

No to S.55

Ed Gilman

Ladies and gentlemen of the legislature, this bill (S.55) as worded would ban more than half the handguns and hunting rifles in the state. It and related bills should be scrapped, not amended. Backing bills like this would virtually assure being voted out of office in the next election. In this matter, it can only be assumed the governor has sold out to people who have no real understanding of the issue. Please do not join him - vote NO!

I Paul Stuart

I, and everyone I know, is opposed to S. 55 which is essentially a full-fledged assault weapons ban!!!

This will not stop criminals from getting guns.... just as making drugs illegal- doesn't stop people from getting them

Michael Greig

Dear Sirs,

I was thinking of retiring to VT within 2-3 years, as the state's relative freedom and scenic beauty is appealing to me.

If S.55 passes,I will just move to neighboring NH,as I don't care to move from one bureaucratic and overbearing state-NY-to another.Sooner or later bureaucrats will realize that gun-owners are safe and moral people not because their 2A rights are restricted,taxed,or outright denied,but simply because they are law abiding citizens.

It is a joke that so many of the bureaucrats that would like to tell us how to live and what we can own or do turn out to be totally incompetent,or corrupt,or womanizers-or in the case of Nashville's ex-mayor,man-izers-and/or otherwise downright fraudulent and despicable in their private and public lives.

My next move will be to a free state-if you keep VT free from this type of invasive bureaucratic idiocy,VT will remain a major consideration for us.

If not it will be NH,as when I retire I will do my best to keep useless paperwork and excessive regimentation as far way as possible.

Been there-done that.

Regards,

Jon Blumenfeld

Good morning,

I was born and raised in Bennington county. I'm 28 years old and I'm married with a young child. I can tell you that the legislation being proposed is a problem for a number of reasons, some or all of which aren't being considered.

I know everyone likes to point to places like Australia and the U.K. What isn't being realized, like in the case of Australia, is that gun related deaths (including suicide) had been decreasing for about a decade prior to the ban. What's more is that the violent crime rate after the bans increased. Likewise in California (where there are strict

regulations) they are having increases in violent crime. I know firearm statistics quite well and I'm happy to discuss further.

It's not just about gun related deaths and homicides but over and over where guns are restricted and banned you usually see violent crime increase. In Vermont and more specifically Bennington, where we have big drug problems this is an even greater concern. I have a serious problem with you attempting to take away or infringe on my God given right to self preservation, as recognized in the constitution.

I also have a problem that the people proposing gun restrictions do not seem to have a basic understanding of terminology or function of the firearms they discuss. On a regular basis I see legislators using incorrect language about firearms showing a severe lack of knowledge on the subject.

By definition a criminal doesn't follow laws. By limiting carrying capacity anyone using a gun to defend lives now has an increased chance of being the first person to run out of ammo in an intense situation where cover is being taken. I don't think a 15 round or even 20 round capacity is unreasonable. You also have no right to know where or how firearms are stored. The cause of gun related homicide is not due to irresponsible storage of firearms. Someone who wants to commit suicide will either find a way into the storage or do so without a firearm. Guns do not cause suicide even though they are the favorite tool.

The last point I'll make in this email is actually a fiscal problem related to gun legislation.

As I said I have lived here all of my life and I know a lot of people not just in Bennington county but across the state. This is the last straw for many of us and we are ready to leave the state over infringement of the 2nd amendment. This state already faces serious tax revenue issues for 3 general reasons.

1. The kids who get educated and go to college do not come back. Lack of good paying jobs, high taxes, and an unfriendly business environment are 3 big reasons why.
2. We have a high senior citizen population that pay little to no taxes. Not their fault and I'm not suggesting they should, but it is an economic reality.
3. In this tax and spend state there are enough handouts to incentivize working less or not at all. No tax revenue there either.

The people I referenced that are ready to leave this state are actually tax paying citizens who have had enough and this is the straw that is going to break the camels back.

I could go on in more detail about these subjects and others, but for this email I will leave it here. We have put up with a lot in this state because it's been our homes and our families are here. No more. I and many others are ready to leave the state.

Cody Crossman

Dear Representatives of the House Judiciary committee,

I am vehemently requesting that you vote No and oppose the S.55 anti gun bill as well any other anti gun bills. These bills do nothing to prevent or stop criminal activity and directs its focus at law abiding citizens fundamental rights. The current anti gun climate is based on emotions instead of logic and affects those who follow the laws currently in place. This will only prevent the citizens of the state from exercising a right to choose what to own, whom haven't misued their rights's, and the potential to lose that right because of single individuals whom cannot function in society. Vermont is one of the safest states in the country and this proposal is a solution looking for problem. Please seek alternatives that punish the individuals resposible for misdeeds instead of broad stroke laws that punish the collective. Our constitution states, "innocent until proven guilty", not "guilty until proven innocent"! That is what laws like S.55 create.

Respectively,

Daniel Nercessian

Competitive shooter

Hunter

NO NEW GUN CONTROL LAWS

NO TO S.55

NO TO LALONDE AMENDMENTS

Respectfully,

Seth Washburn

[23 Richfield Ln](#)

[Colchester, VT 05446](#)

[802-734-8646](#)

I am sending this email in Regards to bill S.55. I strongly oppose this bill as a sportsman/resident of the state of Vermont. This state has a long heritage of responsible law abiding gun owners and sportsman that this bill will greatly effect as well as infringe on our rights. I hope you as well as the other committee members will take this into consideration and oppose this bill. This bill is over the top with regulations that will have a direct impact on the law abiding gun owner.

I thank you for your time and your service to our great state, please oppose and protect our rights as residents of Vermont!!

Sincerely,

Nicholas Cupoli

My name is Leo Betit. Let me introduce myself. I am a native Vermonter, a Vermont taxpayer, 27 year veteran of the US Armed Services, a veteran of the Cold War and Operation Iraqi Freedom, a certified Vermont Hunter Education Instructor, and a law abiding firearms owner. I am writing this today to strongly protest this knee jerk political bill to infringe on Vermonters rights to keep and bear arms.

I am appalled on how out of touch this political body is with the real issues that "we the people" face in Vermont. This body is servient to the people, yet this body chooses to ignore the real issues that face Vermont residents and focus on politically motivated issues that has little bearing on Vermont and Vermont residents at this time. So let me remind this body with some facts. First Vermont is the 9th most heavily taxed state in the country. We are also #1 in heroin and other illicit and ILLEGAL drugs. Vermont is considered the heroin capital of the country. What are our tax dollars doing about that? I can tell you how my and other Vermonters tax dollars are being squandered. My tax dollars not only is being used to pay law enforcement to fight the war on ILLEGAL drug use (which it should be), but it is also being used to pay the salary of Sarah George (Chittenden County State's Attorney) and other politicians in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches who advocate the setting up of "free spaces", which will also be funded by my tax dollars, for heroin addicts to "shoot up" free from prosecution, with trained professionals, paid for by my tax dollars, on hand to administer NARCAN", purchased with my tax dollars, when they overdose. How insane and ludicrous is that? We are supposed to be fighting ILLEGAL drug use not encourage ILLEGAL drug use. That is not very mission focused, and an example of why Vermont is the 9th most heavily taxed state in the country.

What about healthcare? Is this body working on making healthcare affordable for all Vermonters? Here's another number for you; 1500. Did you know that Southwestern Vermont Medical Center charges a Vermont patient \$15.00 per one (1) 200mg pill of Ibuprophen? Let me say that again; \$15.00 for one (1) 200mg pill of Ibuprophen. Did you know that you can go to Walmart and buy a 200ct bottle of Ibuprophen for around \$3.00. Southwestern Vermont Medical Center is charging a 1500% mark up over retail price, and they buy at bulk wholesale prices. What are you doing about that? An average family healthcare plan in Vermont costs around \$1200 a month. About the same as a mortgage payment. What is this body doing to reduce these prices and make healthcare more affordable for Vermonters?

I have heard this body would like to see more Vermonters stay in this state, yet you do nothing to encourage them to stay. What about corporations and agencies that financially rape Vermonters. What are you doing to reduce costs? The Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles has raised the price on

registrations and licenses every year for the last 10 years. And last year the new inspection law went into effect. This law is discriminatory. A lot of Vermonters cannot afford to fix their vehicles especially certain malfunctions that cause the check engine light to come on. And we are told this is to improve our air quality. What a crock this is. Sit on Main Street here in Bennington and watch the big "rigs" driving through town. My little jeep with the "check engine" light on for an EVAP malfunction only put out a fraction of the emissions as these big "rigs" do spewing black smoke when they take off. What are you doing about that?

Green Mountain Power charges the 6th highest electrical rate in the country. Both of my daughters moved to North Carolina. My oldest daughter lives in a three bedroom house with her husband and three kids. Their electric bill averages \$55-60 per month. January was unusually cold for North Carolina this year yet their electric bill was only \$90 for January and they have electric heat. To put that into perspective, my wife and I live by ourselves here in Pownal, our electric bill averages \$120 during the summer months and \$130-150 during the winter. Why is that? Did you also know that Green Mountain Power also charges every customer a \$1.50 charge every month that's supposed to go into a fund to help people that can't pay. By Green Mountain Power's own data that's \$600,000 every month, or \$7.2 million per year. Where does that money go and who is in charge to administer it? When my father in law was alive, he lived on a fixed income and has called Green Mountain Power on several occasions because he couldn't afford to pay his bill, to no avail. He had to rely on family members to help because Green Mountain Power would not help. What is that fund really for? What is this body doing about that?

I see all the solar farms sprouting up all over the countryside. Who benefits from those. Certainly not Vermont residents here in southern Vermont. Our rates continue to increase, yet these solar panels continue to produce electricity everyday with little to no maintenance. I have also heard that this body wants to improve the habitat. Really? I'll give you one example to prove that this is false. I travel north on rt 7 in Pownal and Bennington every day to work. Three years ago the field across from the Bennington County Sheriff's office contained deer, coyote, fox, and turkey every morning. It was a feeding area for deer. Now it is fenced off and contains solar arrays. Yes, it is just one, but how many more are there in the state? How many feeding and bedding areas in the state are now solar arrays? No this body is not for the habitat.

Education reform is also a concern for not just only Vermonters, but all Americans. What are you doing about that? Try a little experiment, go to schools throughout the state and ask 5th to 12th graders these basic questions. What is 8×7 or 9×7 , who was George Washington and what role did he play in the United States, what happened on September 11, 2001, and who was Ethan Allen. I believe that this should prove my point about education reform.

Another number for you \$56000. That is the median house hold income in Vermont. That is one of the lowest in the North east, and in the bottom half of the country. I have always said that when it comes to jobs Vermont stops at Rutland. What is this body doing to encourage jobs that pay a livable wage to come into Vermont, especially southern Vermont? When I talked to my representative at election time (isn't it funny that the only time we see our senators and representative is at election time. When do they see how their constituency feels about certain bills so they can vote accordingly?) and I mentioned the topic of jobs he said he was excited because the new Walmart was opening and hiring a lot of people. News flash.....Minimum wage and or part time is not a livable wage, especially when you factor in the 9th highest paid taxes in the country, Unaffordable healthcare, the high cost of operating a motor vehicle in Vermont, the raping of residents by corporations like Green Mountain Power, the average rent for a two bedroom apartment is \$900/month and many need first, last, and security deposit, plus all necessities are all going up at a faster rate than wages. What are you doing about that?

My next number is 3. Vermont is the 3rd safest state in the country. As a matter of fact, by using Vermont State Police's data and gunviolence.org, you are 49 times more likely to die in a motor vehicle than by gun violence in Vermont. By putting that in perspective, this gun control bill is ludicrous and is not a priority. Historically, Vermont has some of the most liberal gun laws in the country, yet is one of the safest states in the country. So tell me why do we need this bill? This is not Chicago, NYC or Washington DC. Cities with the most restrictive gun laws and the most gun violence. Is this body so concerned with political posturing that you want to take a chance on making Vermont more like other locals that have higher crime and more restrictive laws? Common sense dictates that the problem with the increase in violence is not because the availability of firearms, but because of several factors. One is the break up of the family. With the increased costs of living and lower wages most two parent homes must have two incomes to survive. This leaves kids to their own devices with little supervision. Secondly, our society glorifies death and crime. Spend an night watching TV and count how many times you see death or acts of crimes. Popular video games glorify this also by the more people you kill, rape or pillage the more points you get. The state and phycologists have gotten involved in the parenting process, all within the last 30 years, now parents can't or won't be parents. Couple all that with what's reported in the media and you have a recipe for this violence to continue and get worse. When the latest mass shooting happened in Florida for the next week all that was reported in the media was the mass shooting. The incident is still being reported on. When is enough, enough? Couple that with the feeling by teens across the country that they are not responsible for their actions, that everything is owed them, what do you expect? A gun is a tool, pure and simple. It can be used for good or evil. This body cannot legislate use. Every tool man has created, man has used for evil. This bill only effects the law abiding citizen. It does nothing to stop the criminal. Why is it, as with all supposedly common sense gun control legislation, that the law abiding is punished, yet the criminal is not affected?

Before I touch on one last thing I want to remind this body of an article of the Vermont Constitution. In particular Article 6.

Article six reads:

That all power being originally inherent in and consequently derived from the people, therefore, all officers of government, whether legislative or executive, are their trustees and servants; and at all times, in a legal way, accountable to them.

This body is a servant of the people. How many of this body was going to vote on this bill, or as a fact any bill before you checked with your constituency to see how the majority felt about it? Wouldn't that be a matter of importance? Isn't that how this body should work for the people? Has this body forgotten what "we the people of Vermont" really need and want? Has this body forgotten that its sole job is working to better the real issues facing Vermont and it's residents? Has this body forgotten that the Vermont Constitution is the frame work for the freedom of Vermonters and should be defended and not taken apart? If this body was concerned with its constituency and their views, why was no one told of this bill until now, only a couple of days before it goes to a vote? Was this body trying to push a bill through

without the endorsement of your constituency? I would call that irresponsible, disrespectful, and boarder line criminal.

The last thing I want to touch on is the Bill of Rights and other legal binding oaths. This is something I take very seriously, I gave 27 years of my life, my family made sacrifices so that I could defend this country, our freedom and our rights. What I have to say I have the right to say, given that for 27 years I was ready to pay the ultimate sacrifice to defend this country and to defend your rights and freedom. The oath I took is binding to me and I feel every oath that a person takes is binding and if violated is punishable by law.

Does this Oath sound familiar to all you members of this body?

You do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will be true and faithful to the State of Vermont and that you will not, directly or indirectly, do any act or thing injurious to the Constitution or Government thereof. (If an affirmation) Under the pains and penalties of perjury.

If it does then read on.

Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution reads; 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 are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up; and that the military should be kept under strict subordination to and governed by the civil power.

By the Vermont Constitution the "People" is defined as "all free men and free women 18 years of age" Just by those two parts of the Vermont Constitution and the submitting of this bill by Martin Lalonde and advocating this gun control measure by our governor Phil Scott, these two politicians violated their Oath of Allegiance to the state of Vermont. This gun control bill is "injurious to the Constitution....."

As a Vermont resident, a Vermont taxpayer, a Vermont free man, a law abiding citizen, a solid member of a Vermont community, a positive role model for todays youths, a safe and legal firearms owner, and a 27 year veteran, I formally demand that the senate body vote NO to this political, knee jerk legislation that will help to increase illegal activity in Vermont and increase the threat of danger to our youths, while ignoring the root problems of the perceived increase in

violence, and the ignoring of the real issues facing Vermont residents today. I also formally call for the immediate termination of Martin Lalonde, Governor Phil Scott and all who vote in support of this bill for doing "any act or thing injurious to the Constitution".

Leo T Betit

From: Jennifer Neddo
Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 7:52 AM
To: Maxine Grad
Subject: S.55

Kimberly,

I'm a registered voter in East Montpelier and I oppose S.55. We have some of the least restrictive gun laws in the country and one of the lowest rates of gun violence, this tells me that the laws we have currently are working, whereas places with incredibly strict gun laws have much higher rates of gun violence, why try to fix something that isn't broken in Vermont? Please vote NO on S.55. Thank you,
Jennifer Neddo

From: Robert C. Potter
Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 7:54 AM
To: Maxine Grad
Subject: 2nd Amendment

Good Morning,

With regards to new firearm laws.... We don't need any! It's an answer without a problem in Vermont.

New laws would not have stopped the most recent shooting in Royalton, the guy already had a restraining order and was prohibited from having firearms. The two shootings in Burlington where drug related and the participants were convicted felons. A shooting several years ago in Royalton was drug related. Existing laws need to be enforced before feel good new laws are enacted.

This recent furor came about because of a school shooting in Florida that raises more questions than anything else. Why was so many reports of this kids issues to local cops and FBI ignored? Why did the on scene cop not go in immediately as is protocol, why was the order given to set up a perimeter, and why was the school administration asking law enforcement not

to arrest students because they did not want to have local statistics look bad? This should be fully investigated before knee jerk reactions drive policy and law making.

I would ask all involved in this to read the 2nd Amendment and Vermont's Article 16 and reflect on the reason our founding fathers felt this was necessary. Then, ask yourself if changing this is worthy of a knee jerk reaction or well thought out discussion. Then, ask yourself if you are worthy of making changes to a 200 year old document on a spur of the moment decision. And last, but not least, why are so many transplants from out of state trying to drive this legislation. You moved here presumably because you like Vermont, then you try to make it more like where you came from. Some have not even been here 10 years. Half the politicians talking about guns know nothing about them. One woman spoke out about a "scary looking" gun that was actually a bolt action 22. You should learn your material if you think you are qualified to vote on it.

The kids that are driving this urgency are the same kids that a couple months ago politicians were worried about eating Tide Pods! Come on people.... Think things out here.

Thanks

Bob

From: Baroffio, Joe

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 8:28 AM

To: Francis Brooks; Ann Cummings; Anne Donahue; Patti Lewis; Anthony Pollina; Maxine Grad

Subject: S-55

Good Morning,

I am writing to express my objection to the above referenced bill and encourage you to vote against it and any other piece of legislation that aims to strip down a constitutional right of the people of Vermont. As a lifelong Vermonter (who votes) I, as well as what appears to be an ever increasing voice of people opposed to this legislation are outraged that such a knee jerk reaction is taking place among our elected officials.

In Vermont, as you know, we have an opioid crisis, roads and bridges are falling apart underneath our vehicles, the taxes are so high that people are moving out, our young people can't find jobs in state so they can pay off exorbitant student loans, we have social programs that are bankrupting our state and I could go on and on....What we don't have in this state is a gun control problem!

From what I understand, the Sargent of Arms is being overwhelmed with phone calls calling for the opposition to any gun control measure. The grass roots opposition that is being generated on social media is growing by the day.... This should speak volumes to any elected official as for every one person that speaks up, you can bet there are 10 (or more) who feel the same way who don't.

I thank you for your time and I again, encourage you to vote against this type of bill.

With respect,

Joe Baroffio
Northfield, VT

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 8:30 AM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S.55 etc

Madam, your stance on my right to keep and bear arms is entirely unacceptable.

I would imagine if similar restrictions were proposed on rights that you value, you would be up in arms. With that in mind, I will not stand idly by as you attack my right to the means to defend myself, my home, and my family and community.

Article 16th of the Vermont Constitution is clear, and I for one will brook no insult to it, and am tired of, and angered by, the incessant attacks upon it by such as you in the name of "safety" and "children." I'll keep my children safe without your "help".

Gun control is statist class warfare.

It is EVIL.

And its proponents are exactly that at worst, and hopelessly and dangerously misguided at best.

It is important to me that you understand that legislation such as you are sponsoring poses an existential threat to my safety, and I will not tolerate it, nor will I comply with unjust and unconstitutional gun laws, and I am far from alone.

Stop it.

You would do well to read this, and heed its implicit counsel.

<https://hudsonvalleyone.com/2016/07/07/massive-noncompliance-with-safe-act/>



[Massive noncompliance with SAFE Act | Hudson Valley One](https://hudsonvalleyone.com/2016/07/07/massive-noncompliance-with-safe-act/)

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Politics, government, breaking news, schools,
arts & music, local events, calendar &
classifieds.

Most sincerely,

Eddie Garcia

St Johnsbury

From: Matt Vigna

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 8:34 AM

To: Maxine Grad; Chip Conquest; Tom Burditt; Selene Colburn; dickdickinson@comcast.net; Kimberly Jessup; Martin LaLonde; Kiah Morris; Barbara Rachelson; Janssen Willhoit

Subject: S. 55

Please say NO TO S.55! Don't New York our Vermont. These laws are completely unnecessary in our state.

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 8:40 AM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: Concerned Citizen

Rep. Grad,

I am disappointed to see the discussion around "Rep" LaLonde's California/New York nonsense pertaining to my Constitutional rights. This is simply unacceptable on every level and needs to stop immediately.

NO waiting periods.

NO bans.

NO new gun laws.

Rob Ashton

Underhill, VT

From: Christopher J. Gould <Christopher.J.Gould@dartmouth.edu>

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 8:41 AM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S55

Good Morning Representative Grad,

I am writing to you to ask you to please strike down S55. It goes against everything our State and Federal Constitution stands for. It is sad so many of our legislatures hope the solution to mental health lies somewhere in the gun debate. I find such consideration misguided considering how many of your friends and neighbors own guns and are quite sane. We truly are citizens and care for Vermont as much as you. Please think twice before you marginalize and or criminalize our beliefs. You had a mental health bill and it has been destroyed with left wing gun solutions. The only consolation I will hold to in this will be many many critical talking points in the coming elections.

Thank you,

Chris J. Gould

Facilities Maintenance
Squad Leader

Good morning

I am reaching out to express my strong opposition to S.55. The bill is extremely poorly written and has a tremendous negative impact on lawful firearm owners in Vermont.

I can dig deeper into the basis of my opinion if you would like to have the discussion, but I hope you already understand the implications of banning arbitrary features and the effectiveness of doing so (we have years of data from the original Clinton AWB as well as the state's that have done so).

Very respectfully,

Max Kennedy,
Underhill, VT

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 9:11 AM

To: Mitzi Johnson; BJoseph@leg.state.vt.ur; Tim Ashe; Barbara Rachelson; Chip Conquest; Christopher Pearson; Debbie Ingram; Gary Viens; Janssen Willhoit; Kimberly Jessup; Kiah Morris; Eileen Dickinson; Mike Bailey; Maxine Grad; Martin LaLonde; Michael Sirotkin; Philip Baruth; Selene Colburn; Tom Burditt; Virginia Lyons

Subject: Bill S.55

NO to S.55 -instead, protect our children by retrofitting school entry points with cameras, remote access entry and security on site.

STOP eroding the freedoms of Vermonters!

Respectfully,

Devon Dougall

From: Peter Debono

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 9:20 AM

To: Maxine Grad; Chip Conquest; Tom Burditt; Selene Colburn; dickdickinson@comcast.net; Kimberly Jessup; Kiah Morris; Barbara Rachelson; Gary Viens; Janssen Willhoit; Martin LaLonde

Subject: S.55 gun safety (CONTROL) Bill

My name is Peter and I've been born and raised in this great state and this great country. My grandfather fought in world war 2, survived enemy fire, 3 bombing and countless other hardships so that I could live a better and free life. If he were alive today to witness the measures you all are taking to restrict our rights he would surely fall over dead in his tracks. I know he's rolling over in his grave this instant. I believe in this state, I believe in this country and the fundamental qualities it was built on. If you're willing to give up one right your willing to give up ALL rights. And I'll be damned if I give up my rights that my grandfather fought for, without a fight. Surely you all must recognize that gun control simply doesn't make society safer. It simply limits the capacity in which citizens can protect themselves. Gun control makes easy targets. Criminals BREAK laws. They don't care what kinds of laws you pass. In fact they're rooting for gun control because it makes they're goal easier to obtain. Now they're victims can't fight back. This is why I'm asking you please to say NO to s.55 and the lalonde amendment. And get rid of the dangerous fallacy of "gun free zones".

Know that there is a COALITION of people gaining support and traction to NOT reelect all of you who support and vote for 2nd amendment restrictions. And we will succeed. You will not be re-elected. There are hundreds of thousands of us firearms supporters And enthusiasts in VT and we WILL make sure to vote.

Please do not make sheep out of us law abiding citizens.

Thank you

-Pete D.

.....
Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 9:20 AM

To: Maxine Grad; Chip Conquest; Tom Burditt; Selene Colburn; dickdickinson@comcast.net; Kimberly Jessup; Martin LaLonde; Kiah Morris; Barbara Rachelson; Gary Viens; Janssen Willhoit

Subject: S.55

I would respectfully like to inform you that my stance is "NO HOW, NO WAY TO S.55"

Thank you.

Ben Vicere

22 Harlow Road

Springfield, VT 05156

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 10:10 AM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: Bill S.55

This bill goes to far. The shameless use of school kids by politicians to further this agenda GOES TOO FAR!! You should be ashamed. Instead of chasing after innocent Americans who chose to exersize their RIGHT as recognized by the Constitution of The United States of America, your party would serve the issue of school safety in two more effective manners.

1. Psychiatrists and Psychologists have successfully identified the profile of school shooters. Put it to use. Warning signs are there yet only seem to be recognized in hind sight. Spur these people who are already ensconced in what qualifies as the present day educational system, and make them DO THEIR JOB!! Of course that impetus won't come from your offices. You career politicians seem to forget, YOU WORK FOR US NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND!!

2. You politians have ARMED SECURITY protecting your useless persons. Give them up and reallocate the monies to ARMED SCHOOL SECURITY. Of course this would mean you would need to make a sacrifice... Hire Vets and Retired Police for the job and not only will you make the schools safe you will increase the economic stimulation that is happeing under the current president.

I know better than to think either of these suggestions would be given the time of day and my e-mail will fade into obscurity in your spam folder. Yet, you would do well to pay heed. The times are changing as the pendulum reaches its full swing, and hopefully, you will be out of your elected job and back out in the private sector in the next election.

I wish you well,

Kenneth Decato

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 11:10 AM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S.55

Hello,

My name is Kyle Demeritt, I am a resident of Fairfax, VT, a graduate of UVM that chose to stay in state as a 6th generation Vermonter. I am a business owner, property owner, husband, father of two and a dedicated coach of youth athletics.

I want to deeply express to you that the language in bill S.55 does not represent my beliefs as a tax payer, voter and resident of the state of Vermont.

While any responsible gun owner will agree, we need to make steps to keep weapons out of the hands of those who should not have access (butter knives included), this bill does not in any way provide applicable measures to do so. In fact, we currently have laws on the books that would do a far better job of keeping our children safe than what is represented in S.55, if the state would simply enforce these laws. I have had conversations with multiple officers, retired and current about convicted felons possessing firearms in this state, unanimously they told me they were aware of many, but their "higher-ups had bigger fish to fry" (direct quote).

Thank you for your time, I sincerely look forward to supporting bills in the future that will protect the people of this state, and country.

But I can not support bill S.55

Thank you,

Kyle Demeritt

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 11:39 AM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S.22

Dear Ms. Grad,

I respectfully urge you to reject the Lalonde amendment to S.22 . These feel-good attempts at resolving the school shooting issue will have no impact on the problem. The term "assault weapon" is a term made up to make these guns sound evil and sinister by those who want ALL guns eradicated from the US.

I understand that this is a very emotional issue on both sides. Legislating by emotion to "just do something" is never a good idea. Please show your support to both the US and Vermont Constitutions.

Thank you! ---Curt Nieckarz 1526 Bartlett Hill Rd. Jeffersonville, VT 05464

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 11:58 AM

To: Maxine Grad; Chip Conquest; Tom Burditt; Selene Colburn; dickdickinson@comcast.net; Kimberly Jessup; Martin LaLonde; Kiah Morris; Barbara Rachelson; Gary Viens; Janssen Willhoit

Subject: NO TO S.55

Good morning,

I write today as a 5th generation Vermonter, business owner, legal gun owner and sportsman. The guns are not the problem, and we DO NOT have a gun crime problem in Vermont. Look at the facts and take the emotion out of this discussion.

I have had 5 children go through the public school system and never feared shootings in our schools because of the security they have in place. Secure the schools to keep our children safe and don't blame the acts of sick minds on guns !

You need to oppose the LaLonde Amendment to S.55. As elected officials you are in office to represent the voice of the people of Vermont, and the people are speaking that they do not support this amendment.

Thank you for your time,

Steve Carlin

Fairfax, VT

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 1:13 PM

To: Richard Sears; Mitzi Johnson; Maxine Grad; maxig@wcvt.com

Subject: Bill S.55

Dear Representatives,

I would first like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Mariah Mitchell from Morrisville, VT. I am a Volunteer Vermont Hunter Education Instructor, Firearm Instructor at Vermont Outdoors Woman Doe Camp, and also a Volunteer with the Vermont Federation of Sportsmen Clubs and Operation Game Thief. I began hunting after I attended Green Mountain Conservation Camp at Buck Lake at twelve years old. I am now twenty, and educate not only children but also adults ranging from 18 years old to 70 years old on the importance of firearm safety.

I take great pride in having the opportunity to educate the public on this matter. Education is crucial, as well as respect. Students ranging from six years old to 40+ have come through my Hunter Education classes. In every class I instill the importance of respect, familiarity, and safety with any firearm that the student may handle in their life time. In order for a student to pass my class, they must demonstrate respectful and safe behavior. I will not pass a student unless I feel 100% comfortable with their behavior, and I monitor it to the best of my abilities throughout my course.

Now, I would like to discuss my experiences while teaching at Doe Camp. Vermont Outdoors Woman Doe Camp is an all women's three day retreat that offers a wide variety of classes: Ice fishing, crocheting, Nordic skating, snowshoeing, basket weaving, cross-country skiing, archery, handgun marksmanship & safety, and rifle & muzzleloader skills & safety. I have the pleasure to instruct the handgun marksmanship & safety class as well as the rifle & muzzleloader skills and safety class.

What I love most about teaching this class is having the opportunity to empower women. Most women who come through the class have never had the opportunity to work with a firearm. Some women have family who hunt, but want to learn from someone other than their spouse, others are timid but want to become more familiar with firearms. No matter what their background is, every woman who has come through my class has left more confident and empowered.

One particular story has stuck with me since I began teaching. There was a woman that I had the pleasure to work with who was a legal caseworker. Most of her cases were regarding crimes involving firearms. She had developed this "hatred" toward firearms, although she had never had the opportunity to handle one. She was taking my class with the hope that she could dissolve the negative emotion toward an object that in all reality is harmless, unless put into the hands of someone dangerous. After having the opportunity to work with a wide variety of firearms ranging from a .22 rifle to an AR-15, she left my class feeling much more comfortable about firearms.

The reason I am writing you today is in response to bill S.55. I firmly believe that banning any form of firearm will not solve or minimize gun violence in the state of Vermont. The state of Vermont currently has some of the most lenient gun laws, yet is one of the safest states in the U.S. Removing firearms from law abiding citizens will not keep them out of the hands of unlawful citizens- criminals. If a criminal wants a firearm, they will get it, despite the laws.

The state of Vermont needs to focus on mental health issues and bullying. A majority of deaths resulting from firearms is from suicide. The school systems need to stop saying their schools have "zero tolerance" for bullying, and actually enforce it. There need to be people who are passionate enough to listen and help others when they need it. There were multiple signs made by the Florida shooter that were ignored, and could have potentially prevented the tragedy from occurring if taken seriously.

The guns are not the problem, people are the problem. Until the mental health issues are addressed, the firearms will continue to make their way into the hands of a dangerous individual. The concept is no different than the heroin problem that we are experiencing in this state. Although heroin is illegal, people still find a way to use the drug. As long as firearms exist, criminals will continue to get their hands on them.

Taking away the rights from law-abiding citizens is unjust and goes against the 2nd amendment. The state of Vermont needs to focus on the actual problem, rather than blame it on an object that is 100% harmless, unless put in the hands of a dangerous individual. These individuals will continue to get their hands on a firearm, whether it is a semi-automatic, or a pump action 20 gauge shotgun. Bill S.55 will only make lawful citizens vulnerable to attack by those who have harmful intentions.

Please vote no.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Mariah Mitchell

.....

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 2:05 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S.55 amendment

Dear Maxine Grad,

It might be to late, but I am writing you about the amendment proposed to S.55 to ban magazines over 10 rounds and modern sporting rifles (grips, telescoping stocks, muzzle breaks, etc.). I'm asking you to please vote that down. While I do agree there needs to be changes to gun policy I don't feel these are the right changes. I feel like it's affecting the responsible gun owners, more than the irresponsible and dangerous gun owners. Even the kid from Fair Haven that wanted to shoot kids and teachers in his previous school stated during his interview with police that he could easily get a gun off the dark web to use in a mass shooting, and with a ban of this sorts I feel a black market for these items will be quick to follow in VT. I am in favor of removing weapons from high risk situations, if someone's suspected off attempting suicide, or is violent, or if there's domestic abuse present or a restraining order issued. I'm okay with more extensive background checks, and I would support a safety class/test in order to own one, kind of like how you have to pass a test to drive a car. I grew up in a big hunting family, so I've been around guns my entire life, 23 years all in the great state of Vermont. I was taught to be safe and responsible with firearms, just like I was taught with vehicles, and even power tools, because they can be very dangerous if handled improperly. This new amendment will be affecting people like me, whose

guns sit locked in a safe until I go to the range to plink targets or the few weeks in the fall for hunting season. Someone committing murder doesn't care about these rules, and they will find a way to get the weapon they want. I'm asking you to please consider a different amendment.

Thank you,
Alexander Bilka
Winhall, VT

Sent: Friday, March 16, 2018 2:32 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: Gun Control. Please read.

I understand this will probably fall on deaf ears, but I would appreciate you time to read this.

I urge you to vote NO on S.55. The people that this bill is hurting are the LAW ABIDING CITIZENS! The people who are not supposed to have these guns or high capacity magazines will always have them and always be able to get them. What it really is doing is taking our 2nd amendment right away from us one piece at a time. Take a look at heroine or any other drug, these are illegal substances, but drug abusers are still able to find a way to get their fix.

Rather than vote yes on S.55, think about introducing a bill that will help the mentally ill.

Encourage kids to speak up when something isn't right with another student, when he or she is showing signs of depression or mental illness. Encourage law enforcement to look deep into one's mental state, to deem them a threat or not a threat. Don't put these people on the back burner if they are showing signs of rage. Don't look the other way like the FBI and the Broward County Sheriffs did before Nikolas Cruz went on his killing spree. There were so many fails that our government had with this tragic event.

Don't punish the MILLIONS of LAW ABIDING CITIZENS for acts of a few. Focus on the mental state of these few. These people don't just wake up crazy one day. Teachers see it long before it happens. Fellow students see it long before it happens. Encourage people to speak up, like the young lady did before a tragedy that could have occurred in Fair Haven.

These problems didn't occur 20,30,40 ext. years ago. There were guns. There were no school shootings. Parents and teachers were able to discipline their children back then. They were allowed to give their children spankings. Children could not run the house hold or the school room. Today, these kids have no discipline and they are able to walk all over parents, teachers and other school mates if they don't get their way. They act out of place in public, and not even a child's own parents can properly discipline them. Maybe if we gave power back to the adults to run the world, we would have fewer of these outrageous actions of terror.

The people who think this is a gun issue and not so much a mental health issue are ignorant and reckless with their thoughts. They have obviously never been through a gun safety

class or a hunters safety class. It is sad and disgusting that liberals would rather try to take our guns and our rights rather than help the mentally ill that perform these acts (majority who are registered democrats).

Thank you for your time,

Luke Willey

The Darling family oppose bill S.55.

We don't agree with everything but we are not unreasonable we don't have any issue with the universal background checks. We could care less about 30 round mags or bump stocks, and as for safe storage that is common sense and everyone should keep there guns locked up and safe.

An AR15 is just a semi auto rifle no different then any other hunting rifle except they have an intimidating look. Me and many of my friends own them and we use them for target practice as well as small game hunting and to protect our families.

The bad guys don't care about laws, drugs are illegal and our Vermont towns are full of them. Drinking and driving is illegal but people do it every day.

Please say NO to S.55.

Thank you for your time-

Adam Darling.

Chris Pugliese

I'm a resident of Arlington and have read up on the proposed S.55 bill and would like to bring my opposition to the table. With Vermont being the safest state within the USA the need for new gun legislation is totally unnecessary. I believe the nation as a whole has no issue with law abiding citizens owning firearms, the issue is criminals and the mentally ill. Restrictions and bans of firearms held accountable to law abiding citizens has no validity. Please take my opposition into consideration when casting votes.

Thanks Chris

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 10:28:09 PM

To: Maxine Grad; Mitzi Johnson; maxjg@wcvt.com

Cc: Tom Burditt; William Canfield; Stephen Carr; Brian Collamore; Robin Chesnut-Tangerman; Larry Cupoli; Dennis Devereux; Peter Fagan; Peg Flory; BCollam@aol.com;

cupolvt@comcast.net; mkf3229vt@gmail.com; Douglas Gage; Sandy Haas; shaas@sover.net; James Harrison; Robert Helm; Mary Howard; Patricia McCoy; Terry Norris; Dave Potter; Butch Shaw; David Soucy; Linda Joy Sullivan; Thomas Terenzini; thomas.terenzini@yahoo.com
Subject: Oppose S.55

Hello,

My name is Nick Flanders. I am a 36 year old born & raised Vermonter. I am happily married, and we have 2 boys. We also have 2 nephews, and 5 nieces which makes holidays & family get togethers great. I consider myself to be an extremely hardworking individual; and a law abiding citizen, who enjoys the great freedoms that we have here in Vermont.

Like many other Vermonters, I am considered a normal everyday person who benefits from our yearly traditions and the laws we already have here in place currently. I am proud that this state is the safest in the nation. I am all for making laws that will prevent crime and protect my family. However, S.55 will in no way stop crime, while it WILL completely hinder my freedoms that tens of thousands of Vermonters also enjoy. This is nothing more than a solution in search for a problem. Banning higher capacity magazines, gun accessories, certain types of weapons, additional waiting periods, etc.; none of these restrictions will stop ANY criminal from choosing to commit a crime. It would be a shame to restrict my right to legally use these types of firearms and accessories with my family out of a reaction based solely on emotion and not based on reason or logic.

I think it is absolutely horrible what happened in Florida, but making a decision that will impact 99.9999% of legal gun owners' rights and freedoms will be tragic as well. I am ashamed and shocked that these amendments are being added to a bill that I already thought was unnecessary and overreaching. I ask you as my representative and voice in government that you will strongly oppose and overturn this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Nick Flanders
West Rutland, VT.

.....
I'd like to thank the Judiciary Committee for its service to our state and ask its members to vote against S.55 and any other proposed firearm legislation. I am a resident of

Williston and my family cherishes the outdoor lifestyle that Vermont affords us as much as our freedom.

As such, I do not support a ban on a particular type of firearm, a restriction on firearm magazine capacity, or any other restriction on the purchase, ownership, and use of firearms by otherwise law-abiding members of our community.

I enjoy the use of my firearms for recreational target shooting, hunting, and ultimately as tool to defend my family and our freedom.

We have two children in school; one at CVU and another at Williston Central. I am as concerned about their safety as any parent, but I feel the path to protecting them does not include restrictions on firearms or the addition of more laws.

Thanks for your attention in this matter.

Best-
Rob Curtis
Oak Hill Road
Williston, VT