

From: **Junia Dragon**

Date: Thu, Mar 15, 2018 at 8:54 AM

Subject: Firearms bill

To: Bill Botzow

I have only just learned of a bill being presented (apparently today) suggested by a rep.from South Burlington. This will be an assault weapons ban, and increase gun control in other ways as well? I hope that you will vote against any such Bill that seeks to impinge on 2nd amendment rights in a state that has the least gun control and also the LEAST gun violence out of all 50 states. Vermont does not need help in this department. I moved here from an extremely dangerous environment (Washington DC during the murder capitol.of the world era). Law abiding citizens could not own guns. Gun control did not prevent shootings, it increased them. Good people Were left powerless to defend their families and homes, sitting ducks until the police arrived. In a rural area like this, I don't want to have to wait for police or a Sheriff to arrive were my family in distress. Criminals will always get guns no matter what the law. The guns already exist, and America is a country with gun culture (in particular Vermont). Banning weapon will do nothing to prevent school shootings.

I believe we should instead be talking about arming volunteer teachers who have passed stringent training requirement, volunteer vets willing to stand at the doors of our schools, metal detectors and ID entry. Did you know that at MAUHS (where my daughter attends) their security is opening the doors at a certain time then LOCKING the kids in the school a few minutes later? Anyone could sneak in with a weapon during the morning rush on the front doors. Once inside, a shooter could easily just pick off whoever they wanted. How does an assault rifle ban protect my daughter TOMORROW if there were to be a shooting? It doesn't. I encourage Vermont reps to worry about the immediate need for school security before they expend any energy on fun referendums.

I would be happy to provide testimony on any of these issues, and you are welcome to share my comments.

Rebecca Dragon

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To whom it may concern,

I was informed that I could voice my opinion on Bill S.55 via this address, if that was incorrect I apologize for the inconvenience.

I am a born and raised Vermonter and I find the proposed legislation intrusive on my rights and am very much against the approval of the bill. If I may be included on a form of tally or record of opposition so as a lifelong resident my opinion may aid in the disposal of such an act, I kindly ask whomever to please help my voice be heard.

Thank you for your consideration,

Respectfully,

Malia Trombley

-Bennington County, Bennington VT

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From: Deserae Morin <deserae.myst@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, March 26, 2018 11:41 PM

To: Bill Botzow

Subject: S.55

Dear legislatures,

I would like to submit this email and formally request that it becomes part of the testimony against this bill. I would be honored to publicly make this statement for the legislatures in any upcoming forums. I request the opportunity to do so should it be allowed. Thank you in advance.

I am sending this email to all of you whos addresses I can find. To those of you voting No, I thank you and I hope that you might find strength in my words. To those of you who may be considering changing your Yes vote to a No vote, I hope you find something contained in this letter that will convince you to do so. To those of you determined to vote Yes on this bill, I hope you realize that your decision is fueled by emotions and not facts and that you are betraying the republic you have sworn to serve.

I understand that it is very difficult in the face of such tragedy to hold ourselves accountable to the statistical facts surrounding gun violence rather than succumbing to the extremely difficult emotions we deal with in the wake of these incidences. I also understand that is the very difficult burden that you have all volunteered to bear. I thank you for that service and I encourage you to find strength and seek facts.

We must remind ourselves that a person is more likely to be struck by lightning than to be a victim of a mass shooting. Children are more likely to be beaten to death by their own caregivers than to be victims of a mass shooting. You are more likely to choke to death than to be a victim of a mass shooting. You are more likely to die in an automobile accident. You are more likely to die of medical malpractice. You are more likely to die of a drug overdose. So on and so forth the list of greater dangers goes. In the grand scheme of things the threat that is being used as the basis for gun control is statistically insignificant. Especially here in Vermont. It is not enough of a burden on our State to warrant the imposition policymakers are looking to place on the people of Vermont.

Conversely, it has been statistically shown that firearms play a very important role in a persons ability to defend themselves. Under the direction of the Obama administration the CDC oversaw

a study that found that in America 500,000 to 3 MILLION people a year protect their own lives through the legal and defensive use of firearms. The most popular firearms for self defense are semiautomatic weapons that hold more than 10 rounds. How can these policymakers base their legislation on how statistically frequently this is the weapon of choice for criminals while refusing to acknowledge the statistics about how frequently these types of firearms are the weapon of choice for self defense. Firearm use in the act of self defense SUBSTANTIALY outweighs firearms use in illegal, malicious, aggressive acts. It outweighs it several times over. I believe it would serve our legislatures well to hold these facts in mind when it comes time to write bills and to vote on them.

It should be noted that while America has been manufacturing and purchasing more guns than ever we have also been keeping pace with the rest of the world in our rate of decline in violent crimes. In some cases we are even doing better than countries that have been completely disarmed when it comes to our rates of violent crime. Our problems are not getting worse here in America. Our problems are being represented with extreme misproportion. We must remember to choose facts over feelings. We must remember that this is a republic, not a democracy. Individual liberties are paramount above all else.

As a mother of two young daughters it horrifies me to think that because of rash, statistically unfounded legislation, when my daughters become adults at the age of 18 and they are able to function in this world independently the State of Vermont would seek to have them unable to arm and protect themselves. Statistically speaking this age group of young women is one of the most vulnerable to violence and no person should hinder their access to what is their most effective means of self protection. Especially when not only is that demographic one of the most vulnerable but also one of the most harmless law abiding demographics as well.

Law enforcement officers nation wide and of more impotance, here in Vermont support the right of individual citizens to bear arms and they do not see the need for, nor do they support more gun control laws. Overwhelmingly, law enforcement officers encourage citizens to exercise their rights to self protection. They understand that as officers they more often than not arrive at the scene of a crime only after the fact. They understand that more often than not, when seconds count, they are too far away to be the first line of defense for civilians in danger. They understand that the majority of firearm use happens in the manner of self defense and they know how effective it is. They understand that semiautomatic firearms holding 10 rounds or more are the most frequently used for self protection. The people who are facing off every day with the criminals of this country believe MORE people should arm and train themselves for self protection. I believe that they are correct and I believe that they know a lot more about gun violence, self protection and firearm safety than we do. They live it every day.

Nowhere in our constitution does it say that the people have the right to bear arms which the government deems appropriate. Before these policymakers should start lecturing us on the Supreme Court decisions ruling that the government can regulate what, when and how when it comes to firearms they should remind themselves that the Vermont constitution accepts no such limitations and that the people of Vermont as well as Vermont policy makers have more than once governed this State in direct conflict with laws of the Federal government.

I see that those who wish to vote this bill into effect are willfully ignorant and biased regarding the statistics of gun crimes vs the statistics of firearms used for self defense. I see that they are willfully ignorant and biased about the tools they are wishing to regulate. They will be regulating far more firearms than they even realize with this bill, that or their intention is to EXTREMELY limit the firearms the peaceful citizens of Vermont have access to. They are willing to hinder and in some cases blatantly prevent Vermonters abilities to conduct fair trade of private property and personal goods. They are willing to turn innocent Vermonters into criminals overnight because a deranged person with a bumpstock committed unspeakable acts on the other side of the country, even though no such violence has been committed here in the state of Vermont. They are willing to pass this bill even though the legislation they are proposing grossly miss-categorizes and defines that particular accessory. They are willing to pass this bill even though the legislation they are proposing grossly miss-categorizes and under defines the different weapons they are seeking to limit.

There will also be an untold effect on our State economy because of this bill. Hunting and shooting are a major part of the way of life in most of Vermont. It is also my understanding that we have a manufacturer here that will be hurt by your 10 round magazine limitations. Gun stores, hunting and shooting sports enthusiasts will no longer be able to choose Vermont as a viable place to conduct their desired activities.

The amount of law abiding peaceful citizens that will be negatively effected by this disaster of a bill is far greater than what little good, if any, this bill might accomplish.

Every person in this State wants to keep our children safe. No person is objecting to the idea that we should make our schools as safe as possible and protect our children. There are methods you can utilize to accomplish this goal that will be far more effective than unjustifiably limiting the citizens right to bear arms, I suggest policymakers seek those methods out.

Sincerely,

Deserae Morin

Concerned Vermont Resident

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Maxine,

I urge you to allow more time for the public's opinion to be heard on this bill in it's current form as amended by the House Judiciary Committee. It is nothing like it's original form "an act relating to the disposition of unlawful and abandoned firearms" passed by the Senate JUST three weeks ago !

Everyone has the right to voice their opinion on this controversial topic. Please allow the full process and not make this a hasty emotional choice.

A very concerned constituent from Danville,

Darryl Bradley
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To whom it may concern,

I was informed that I could voice my opinion on Bill S.55 via this address, if that was incorrect I apologize for the inconvenience.

I am a born and raised Vermonter and I find the proposed legislation intrusive on my rights and am very much against the approval of the bill. If I may be included on a form of tally or record of opposition so as a lifelong resident my opinion may aid in the disposal of such an act, I kindly ask whomever to please help my voice be heard. Representatives should represent our people and our people do not approve.

Thank you for your consideration,

Respectfully,

Karissa Crandall

-Bennington County, Bennington VT 05201

To whom it may concern,

I was informed that I could voice my opinion on Bill S.55 via this address, if that was incorrect I apologize for the inconvenience.

I am a born and raised Vermonter and I find the proposed legislation intrusive on my rights and am very much against the approval of the bill. If I may be included on a form of tally or record of opposition so as a lifelong resident my opinion may aid in the disposal of such an act, I kindly ask whomever to please help my voice be heard.

Thank you for your consideration,

Respectfully,

Niles Trombley

-Bennington County, Bennington VT

I am writing today about some of my concerns with s.55 . As the bill sits it looks to me as something that has been thrown together to appease some of the public. Shooting has been my favorite hobby for most of my life and I am a supporter of the 2nd amendment. From what I've seen of the Bill there looks to be 4 main components. The banning of bumpstocks.

Raising the age to purchase a firearm to 21 years old.

Universal background checks for all sales of firearms.

Limiting magazines to a 10 round capacity and banning “ high capacity “ magazines.

I'll start with bumpfire stocks. To me they are just a novelty people buy, they serve no purpose and yes they help raise a rifles rate of fire but there's no accuracy when using them. To someone with little to no firearms experience it they may seem like an enhancement but they actually are the opposite.

Raising the age of buying firearms to 21. I remember this happening with handguns when I was about to turn 18, From what I've seen from when that happened to now I don't think it has made an impact on anything. Which is why I don't believe doing it for all firearms will have the impact desired. Plus the fact you're taking a age group who are considered adults that are allowed to vote, serve in the military etc. and in a way taking part of their 2nd amendment rights by denying them the ability to buy a firearm. As adults they are entitled to their rights as written in the bill of rights and the constitution.

Universal background checks including private sales. The logistics of enforcement of this would be incredibly difficult. If implicated there could be some issues. I think there needs to be more of a review on this.

Banning high capacity magazines and limiting them to 10 rounds. The problem with this is it will end up banning standard magazines. Every firearm that comes with a magazine has a standard magazine specific to that firearm. Not all standard magazines hold the same amount of ammunition. Examples an ar-15 standard magazine holds 30 rounds of ammunition, a beretta m-9 pistol holds 15, a model 1911 pistol holds 8 rounds. Every model is different. 10 round magazines are not readily available for all models so this would end up unintentionally restricting certain firearms. I don't believe it would be fair to gun enthusiasts and sportsman to take away standard magazines, especially when there is no evidence that support magazines capacity restrictions are effective.

I understand because of recent and past events. People are asking for something to be done., but pushing legislation threw hastily is not the answer. I've seen how it has effected sportsman in other states negatively, and not come close to being effective. When it comes to mass shooting, there's much more to it than the tool used. If we want to solve the problem we need to do more than take the easy road and legislate the tools used. We need to find the root of the problem, it's the only way to stop the violence. I'd like to see our legislators stop trying to push this through and take some more time to gather more information before moving forward or finalizing anything.

John Moxley Jr
Bennington

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Please vote no on s.55. Disarming me will do nothing to protect anyone. Criminals don't follow laws. I will gladly support any legislation providing better mental healthcare and education, even if it requires a tax increase.

Katie Henderson

Bennington, vt

My name is Rodney Chase from Brattleboro Vermont. I ask you to vote no on bill S .55 . The criminals will never follow your laws so please do not punish law-abiding Americans by infringing our constitutional right to bear arms. Please take the attempted school shooting in Maryland as an example of the fact that the only thing that can stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun. Or the Texas shooting a couple months back which a passerby stopped the gunman with his own gun. I could continue on with these cases. But the simple fact is that all these mass shooting happen in gun free zones. Take Chicago as an example of super strict gun laws in which there is a epidemic of gun violence. Please feel free to forward this along to anybody you feel fit.

Thanks

Rodney Chase

Brattleboro,vt

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S55

Ma'am,

After seeing you on the news tonight I felt obligated to e-mail you with an opposing point of view. I hope you will at least read what I have to say because i have no doubt that I have much more firearms experience than you.

Now that our elected officials have infringed upon our Constitutional Right to Bear Arms I think it is time to take a look at a few privileges.

First, we should look at raising the age to own a cell phone or to drive a car to 21. National statistics show that allowing this combined privilege results in far more fatalities than death from firearms.

Second, we need to look into banning hypodermic needles. Our opiate epidemic has proven that needles take more lives and destroy more lives than firearms.

Third, we should make it illegal for anyone under 21 to use a spoon. Spoons allow our youth to consume the local brand of ice cream which contributes to child obesity, setting young people up for a higher chance of diabetes.

By now you are thinking these ideas are crazy. Well, I say they are no crazier than stating that guns kill people. We do not have a gun problem, we have a people problem.

Only when we get over our political correctness and admit that we need to deal with mental health issues will we see an end to these mass shootings. The gun is not to blame, our failed system is. Even today another failure of the system was pointed out in the Florida dance hall shooting.

Finally, why do people fail to see that these shootings are only happening in "gun free zones"? Passing S55 is all about votes and appeasing the naive, it will not protect anyone.

Please let common sense prevail over emotion,

Respectfully,
Bob Minard
Jericho, Vt.

I once again urge you to vote NO on Bill S.55 in its current form.

Sincerely,
Jim B. Densmore

On Thu, 15 Mar 2018 20:15:51 -0400, jbdflint@myfairpoint.net wrote:

To Whom it May Concern,

As a law abiding Vermont gun owner, I urge you to vote NO on Bill S.55.

If you truly want to make our schools safer, focus on Mental Health and change Vermont's law's so someone making threats and showing signs of mental instability can be force-ably evaluated and if necessary hospitalized so they can get the help they need before they hurt someone else or themselves. Currently it is almost impossible to get someone with mental health issues into treatment without their consent which is a major issue since most people with mental health issues have no insight into the fact that they need help.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jim B. Densmore

Dear Representative,

I urge you to vote against S.55. Vermont does not have nor has ever had a gun problem. If the real objective is to keep Vermonters safe please focus on something that would have an impact like addressing the rising heroin problem that is plaguing our state. Heroin is claiming more lives and tearing more families apart than a nonexistent firearms issue.

Criminals do not follow the laws and will not follow any of the new restrictions on firearms that have been proposed. If they did, Chicago would be one of the safest cities

in this great nation, but sadly that is not true. Instead criminals and people that wish to do others harm will do what they want while us law abiding citizens will be stripped of measures that we currently have to keep ourselves and our families safe. By doing away with "high capacity" magazines which are actually standard capacity and come as standard equipment when a new firearm is purchased) you will be leaving us law abiding citizens with a reduced capacity to protect ourselves and our loved ones against anyone that may wish to do us harm.

Again I am urging you PLEASE DO NOT support S.55, as it will only harm us law abiding citizens. If you really wish to help Vermonters and protect us let's direct this energy to a real issue like heroin and fighting drugs.

Thank you,

Derik Mumley

Milton, VT

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: You failed Vermonter

You are a disgrace!!!!!!

This is unconditional!!!!

Have fun fighting us in court. Just donated to Vermont sportsman federation legal action fund!!!!

You failed Vermonters for do nothing laws that only affect law abiding Vermonters. It's like your stupid. I just don't understand who voted for you. Do they have a brain? Do you? I guess not!!

Matt Marchessault

St. Albans.

To: Ed Read; Maxine Grad

Subject: No to S.55

Ms. Grad, Mr. Read,

I am adamantly opposed to S.55 as amended. There should be a public hearing on S.55 as stated by Article 20 of the Vermont State Constitution.

Respectfully,

Bob Readie

Warren, VT

To: Robert C. Potter; Tim Briglin; Jim Masland; Maxine Grad; Philip Baruth; Mitzi Johnson; Martin LaLonde; Gabrielle Lucke; Richard McCormack; Alice Nitka; Richard Sears

Subject: New gun laws

Good Evening,

I must say I am disappointed with the way things went today.

However I do have a question for you all. How did we go from trying to disarm domestic abusers and psychiatric patients and have it mutate to something that does nothing for them? Are they not in fashion this week? I thought we had a good thing going that we all could agree on.....

I think you need to get back on the path....

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To: David Ainsworth; Janet Ancel; Robert Bancroft; John Bartholomew; Fred Baser; Lynn Batchelor; Scott Beck; Paul Belaski; Steve Beyor; Clem Bissonnette; Thomas Bock; Bill Botzow; Patrick Brennan; Tim Briglin; Cynthia Browning; Jessica Brumsted; Susan Buckholz; Tom Burditt; Mollie Burke; William Canfield; Stephen Carr; Robin Chesnut-Tangerman; Annmarie Christensen; Kevin Christie; Brian Cina; Selene Colburn; Jim Condon; Peter Conlon; Daniel Connor; Chip Conquest; Sarah CopelandHanzas; Timothy Corcoran; Larry Cupoli; Maureen Dakin; David Deen; Dennis Devereux; Eileen Dickinson; Anne Donahue; Johannah Donovan; Betsy Dunn; Alice Emmons; Peter Fagan; martyfeltus@gmail.com; Rachael Fields; Robert Forguites; Robert Frenier; Douglas Gage; Marianna Gamache; John Gannon; Marcia Gardner; Dylan Giambatista; Diana Gonzalez; Maxine Grad; Rodney Graham; Sandy Haas; James Harrison; helen@helenhead.com; Mike Hebert; Robert Helm; Mark Higley; Matthew Hill; Mary Hooper; Jay Hooper; Lori Houghton; Mary Howard; Kimberly Jessup; Ben Jickling; Mitzi Johnson; Ben Joseph; Bernie Juskiewicz; Brian Keefe; Kathleen Keenan; Charlie Kimbell; Warren Kitzmiller; Jill Krowinski; Rob LaClair; Martin LaLonde; Diane Lanpher; Richard Lawrence; Paul Lefebvre; Patti Lewis; William Lippert; Emily Long; Gabrielle Lucke; Terence Macaig; Michael Marcotte; Marcia Martel; Jim Masland; Christopher Mattos; Curt McCormack; Patricia McCoy; jim_mccullough@myfairpoint.net; Francis McFaun; Alice Miller; Kiah Morris; Mary Morrissey; Mike Mrowicki; Barbara Murphy; Linda Myers; Gary Nolan; Terry Norris; Daniel Noyes; Jean O'Sullivan; Carol Ode; Kelly Pajala; Corey Parent; Carolyn Partridge; Albert Pearce; Paul Poirier; Dave Potter; Ann Pugh; Connie Quimby; Barbara Rachelson; Ed Read; Carl Rosenquist; Brian Savage; Robin Scheu; Heidi Scheuermann; David Sharpe; Butch Shaw; Amy Sheldon; Laura Sibilila; Brian Smith; Harvey Smith; Trevor Squirrell; Tom Stevens; Vicki Strong; Valerie Stuart; Linda Joy Sullivan; Mary Sullivan; Curt Taylor; Thomas Terenzini; George Till; Tristan Toleno; Kitty Toll; Maida Townsend; matrieber@gmail.com; Chip Troiano; Donald Turner, Jr.; Warren Van Wyck; Gary Viens; Tommy Walz; Kate Webb; Cindy Weed; Janssen Willhoit; Theresa Wood; Kurt Wright; David Yacovone; Michael Yantachka; Sam Young

Subject: It is shameful many of you supported such and Invasion on our Rights

Dear Reps

Many of you voted for S55 yesterday and believe you did something good. Let me say that you did not, you passed a Bill that invades on our Rights both Federally and by Vermont's Declaration of Rights. Your first and foremost duty is to SECURE OUR RIGHTS and not find ways to Infringe on them or to alter them under any circumstances. Our RIGHTS are God Given and UNALIENABLE RIGHTS and no level of Government has been delegated any such authority to even remotely infringe on them regardless what some retired Police Officer or Ag may say.

This letter and any replies along with how you all voted yesterday is being published on multiple social media websites and we will work feverishly to make sure that those of you who voted for S55 do not get re-elected and if you think this is just empty words, may I suggest you go to some of the sites and see how people are talking about you and you will quickly note they number in the thousands and we have until November to get that fever growing even more so.

Your authorities do not come from the Emotions of your constituents, nor testimonies from STUDENTS, retired AGs, Police or whomever and it was an insult to my intelligence to hear that that public hearings were over because you had enough testimonies, but do you know what every single one of you left out? Our CONSTITUTIONS and OUR RIGHTS, you have now become the form of Government that so many of our Framers warned us about and why the 2nd Amendment was included in the Bill of Rights and why Article 16 was written as well as Article 7.

There are so many unconstitutional flaws to S55 it would take pages for me to write, I have written them and sent some of them to you all and those I did send were totally ignored. Do you realize that the very elements you EXEMPTED from S55 is why the 2nd Amendment was even created? LaLond kept referring to Vermonters RIGHT to Defend themselves, hunt and shooting sports, he neglected the most crucial part of Article 16 and the 2nd Amendment and I would have to say he intentionally did so because so many of you have NOT read the very Constitutions you have taken an oath to Protect and Defend.

Both the 2nd Amendment and Article 16 refer to not just defense of ones self but also to the State. What do suppose that means?

Amendment II

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**.

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

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

They are NOT our UNALIENABLE RIGHT so we can hunt and just defend our home, possessions and families, but to also defend our Liberties against a Government gone bad or a standing Army that wants to take from us. **Defending Our Liberties has much more of a reason for the people to maintain their GOD GIVEN RIGHT to KEEP and BEAR ARMS than for any other reason.** The British wanted to impose Gun Control on the Colonist and that was the final insult as at that point THREE PERCENT of the Colonist took up arms and fought the world's largest most powerful empire and WON our Independence.

This fight was so important that Jefferson's Declaration of Independence became the FOUNDING DOCUMENT and anyone who partook in the fight for Independence became a U.S. CITIZEN as of the date of the Declaration of Independence, all others stayed British SUBJECTS.

Here are some words from the Declaration of Independence that need to be thought about as S55 is INFRINGING on our RIGHTS and in S55 the individuals who are EXEMPT from the UnConstitutional Law are the Very ones that the PEOPLE need to defend their Liberties from.

With that said read these words and many are repeated in the Vermont Declaration of RIGHTS and Vermont Constitution.

“that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

“That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,”

“That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

Now allow me to quote you some words from our Vermont Constitution and the U.S. Constitution. Also please keep in mind that the Centralized Government has NO AUTHORITIES over the States as their LIMITED AUTHORITIES are DEFINED in the U.S. Constitution and are LIMITED to foreign Issues only. In other words there are NO FEDERAL LAWS that are LEGALLY INSTITUTED pertaining to Gun Control, as Article VI of the U.S. Constitution clearly states that only laws made in pursuance of the Constitution are to be the Supreme Laws of the Land, nowhere in the U.S. Constitution has the Centralized Government been delegated any such authority or many other authorities that the states cower to.

“Article. VI.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding. “

Vermont Declaration of Rights

Article 1. [All persons born free; their natural rights; slavery prohibited]

That all persons are born equally free and independent, **and have certain natural, inherent, and unalienable rights**, amongst which are the enjoying and **defending life and liberty**, acquiring, possessing **and protecting property**, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety;

Article 7. [Government for the people; they may change it]

That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community, and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single person, family, or set of persons, who are a part only of that community; **and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and indefeasible right, to reform or alter government, in such manner as shall be, by that community, judged most conducive to the public weal.**

Chapter II of the Vermont Constitution has some interesting points that need to be made as well and S55 shows that the Vermont General Assembly is indeed breaching their oaths to office and trampling our Rights.

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

§ 6. [LEGISLATIVE POWERS]

.....and they shall have all other powers necessary for the Legislature of a free and sovereign State; **but they shall have no power to add to, alter, abolish, or infringe any part of this Constitution.**

§ 71. [DECLARATION OF RIGHTS NOT TO BE VIOLATED]

The Declaration of the political Rights and privileges of the inhabitants of this State, is hereby declared to be part of the Constitution of this Commonwealth; and ought not to be violated on any pretence whatsoever.

The UNCONSTITUTION ELEMENTS OF S55

Magazine Capacity is Unconstitutional as it puts the Body of the people at a disadvantage to the tyranny of the Government or of a Standing Army gone bad. These who may become the

enemy to our Liberties have been made EXEMPT to this Addition to S55 and that in the passing of S55 makes this current administration more of a tyrannical form of Government than any in our past.

Back Ground Checks While understood why one wants a back ground check, it is an infringement on our Privacy and Security. No other RIGHT is so Unconstitutionally REGULATED as our 2nd Amendment or Article 16 RIGHT. Would not a Website Page for all people to access be less invasive? After all such a site is used by the State currently for Sex Abuse. One could place all Felons, all Mental Disabled etc on the site and then Vermont Law could make it mandatory that BEFORE a Sale of a Firearm that site would have to be searched and anyone on that site is forbidden to purchase or own and then if the seller does sell, then they would be held accountable. At least there would not be a REGISTRY of Vermont Gun Owners, which is the largest reason why Gun Owners are against this. We are in the Computer Age and a National List is not hard to maintain, after all how do the Gun Dealers acquire a Background check? The idea that the seller and buyer have to do a background check in the presence of an FFL Dealer, what if the seller decides to sell anyways, is the FFL Dealer given Law Enforcement Authority or would they even know if the sale continues? The Brady Bill took 1000s of Law Enforcement off of the streets and placed them at computer screens doing background checks and really how do they STOP THE SALE by private individuals?

BUMP STOCKS well this is an accessory and is NOT a firearm, does the General Assembly have Constitutional Authority to Regulate what products can or cannot be sold? Out of all the additions to S55 this is the only one I can agree with IF you can verify you have the Constitutional Authority to Regulate what products can be sold by a merchant.

RAISING THE AGE TO 21 this is very much UNCONSTITUTIONAL as you are depriving a Legal Adult the RIGHT to purchase a firearm for the defense of their family, self, property or state. Either a person is an Adult at 18 or they are an adult at 21 and currently an 18 yr old can Vote, be held accountable and be sent to prison as an Adult, so the General Assembly picking and choosing what one can and cannot do as an Adult, is Unconstitutional and is a slap to WE THE PEOPLE'S FACES, We the people never delegated any such authority to you to tear apart our Rights or to play the Exempt game. If one can Vote and be tried as an Adult than all else that goes with being an adult should, without question be included.

Now allow me to establish that the WHOLE OF THE PEOPLE IS INDEED THE MILITIA and that WE THE PEOPLE have an UNALIENABLE RIGHT to be equally armed as who we might defend ourselves or our state from.

"Who are the militia? Are they not ourselves? Is it feared, then, that we shall turn our arms each man against his own bosom. Congress have no power to disarm the militia. Their swords, and every other terrible implement of the soldier, are the birthright of an American...[T]he unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of either the federal or state governments, but, where I trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands of the people."

--*Tenche Coxe, The Pennsylvania Gazette, Feb. 20, 1788*

"To suppose arms in the hands of citizens, to be used at individual discretion, except in private self-defense, or by partial orders of towns, counties or districts of a state, is to demolish every constitution, and lay the laws prostrate, so that liberty can be enjoyed by no man; it is a dissolution of the government. The fundamental law of the militia is, that it be created, directed and commanded by the laws, and ever for the support of the laws."

--**John Adams**, *A Defense of the Constitutions of the United States* 475 (1787-1788)

"Before a standing army can rule, the people must be disarmed; as they are in almost every kingdom in Europe. The supreme power in America cannot enforce unjust laws by the sword; because the whole body of the people are armed, and constitute a force superior to any band of regular troops that can be, on any pretense, raised in the United States. A military force, at the command of Congress, can execute no laws, but such as the people perceive to be just and constitutional; for they will possess the power, and jealousy will instantly inspire the inclination, to resist the execution of a law which appears to them unjust and oppressive."

--**Noah Webster**, *An Examination of the Leading Principles of the Federal Constitution* (Philadelphia 1787).

"What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms."

-- **Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith**, 1787. ME 6:373, Papers 12:356

"The right of the people to keep and bear ... arms shall not be infringed. A well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the best and most natural defense of a free country ..."

-- **James Madison**, *1 Annals of Congress* 434, June 8, 1789

"What, Sir, is the use of a militia? It is to prevent the establishment of a standing army, the bane of liberty.... Whenever Governments mean to invade the rights and liberties of the people, they always attempt to destroy the militia, in order to raise an army upon their ruins."

-- **Rep. Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts**, spoken during floor debate over the Second Amendment, *1 Annals of Congress* at 750, August 17, 1789

"... but if circumstances should at any time oblige the government to form an army of any magnitude, that army can never be formidable to the liberties of the people, while there is a large body of citizens, little if at all inferior to them in discipline and use of arms, who stand ready to defend their rights ..."

-- **Alexander Hamilton** speaking of standing armies in *Federalist* 29

"The militia is the natural defense of a free country against sudden foreign invasions, domestic insurrections, and domestic usurpation of power by rulers. **The right of the citizens to keep and bear arms has justly been considered, as the palladium of the liberties of the republic; since it offers a strong moral check against the usurpation and arbitrary power of rulers; and will generally ... enable the people to resist and triumph over them.**"

-- **Joseph Story**, Supreme Court Justice, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*, p. 3:746-7, 1833

"The right [to bear arms] is general. It may be supposed from the phraseology of this provision that the right to keep and bear arms was only guaranteed to the militia; but this would be an interpretation not warranted by the intent. The militia, as has been explained elsewhere, consists of those persons who, under the laws, are liable to the performance of military duty, and are officered and enrolled for service when called upon.... [I]f the right were limited to

those enrolled, the purpose of the guarantee might be defeated altogether by the action or the neglect to act of the government it was meant to hold in check. The meaning of the provision undoubtedly is, that the people, from whom the militia must be taken, shall have the right to keep and bear arms, and they need no permission or regulation of law for the purpose. But this enables the government to have a well regulated militia; for to bear arms implies something more than mere keeping; it implies the learning to handle and use them in a way that makes those who keep them ready for their efficient use; in other words, it implies the right to meet for voluntary discipline in arms, observing in so doing the laws of public order."

-- **Thomas M. Cooley**, *General Principles of Constitutional Law*, Third Edition [1898]

"Whereas civil-rulers, not having their duty to the people duly before them, may attempt to tyrannize, and as military forces, which must be occasionally raised to defend our country, might pervert their power to the injury of their fellow citizens, the people are confirmed by the article in their right to keep and bear their private arms."

-- **Tench Coxe**, *in Remarks on the First Part of the Amendments to the Federal Constitution*

"I prefer dangerous freedom over peaceful slavery."

- Thomas Jefferson, letter to James Madison, January 30, 1787

"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

- Benjamin Franklin, *Historical Review of Pennsylvania*, 1759

"Besides the advantage of being armed, which the Americans possess over the people of almost every other nation, the existence of subordinate governments, to which the people are attached, and by which the militia officers are appointed, forms a barrier against the enterprises of ambition, more insurmountable than any which a simple government of any form can admit of."

- James Madison, *Federalist No. 46*, January 29, 1788

"...the ultimate authority, wherever the derivative may be found, resides in the people alone..."

- James Madison, *Federalist No. 46*, January 29, 1788

Sincerely

Craig Averill

Goshen, Vermont

To: Ann Cummings; Anthony Pollina; Maxine Grad; Francis Brooks; Tim Ashe; Janet Ancel; Ed Read;

Christopher Pearson

Cc: Anne Donahue

Subject: Books are being used for body armor

From Arthur (NOT LINDA) Hendrickson in Moretown: Can any of you legislators explain to me how S.55 is going to stop a depraved person from committing a terrible crime? I hope you are not thinking by passing S.55 you have done something constructive. This law is just a "feel good" thing that does absolutely nothing to solve the problem of school shootings. My daughter is a second grade teacher that has had to train her students how to place books inside their shirts to stop bullets. Rather than passing stupid legislation maybe you could improve school security

and do more for people with mental health problems. I think it would be a good idea if all of you listened to Rep. Anne Donahue. It seems she knows more than all of you put together. Art H.

From: Michael Karasinski [mailto:Michael.Karasinski@uvm.edu]

Sent: Monday, March 26, 2018 12:27 PM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: NO S.55

Hello,

S.55 has amendments that are unconstitutional, and as a free Vermonter I can not support them. I demand a public hearing on S.55.

Sent: Sunday, March 25, 2018 8:57 AM

To: Maxine Grad; Martin LaLonde; Mark MacDonald

Subject: S55

My Letter to the Governor.

My hope is that when the final vote takes place in the House and when the Bill goes back to the Senate you will also come to your senses.

“Gov Scott. I voted for you and am shocked that you support S55 or any of the House Amendments. I've been in Law Enforcement for 28 years in Vermont, and trust me I've seen more horrors than you! NEW Firearms laws will do nothing to stop a shooting in this State, school or otherwise. The Legislature and you are giving us the appearance of doing something while really doing nothing. Only a good person with a gun will stop a bad person with a gun.

The statute banning those between 18 and 20 from purchasing a firearm is unconstitutional under the 2nd Amendment and Article 16 of the VT Constitution, trust me all you are doing is forcing years of litigation and you will lose. The law also has a huge hole in it and is therefore unenforceable as they just can't purchase a firearm, but can possess. And the transfer bill allows close family members to transfer without a background check. So, I can easily purchase an AR15 for my 19 year old daughter or my 12, 10, or 8 year old and give it to them as a gift. Yes they all shoot my AR as well as many other firearms. Also, they have all been to Hunter Ed, so they will be exempt(under the House Bill) and able to purchase at 18. Truly a FEEL GOOD law that does nothing and will be defeated years from now. Thank God on both.

As for the 10 round mag cap, now you are infringing on my rights under the US and VT Constitutions and I will not stand for it. You will criminalize an entire segment of good honest law abiding citizens if they choose to purchase a 20, 30 or 40 rd magazine for their firearm. I have a RIGHT to defend myself as I see fit. You will infringe on the civil rights of an entire class of people and accomplish nothing. Again because the law is hollow, it prohibits future purchases but not possession. Do you know how many of those mags are out there and how do

you prove when they were purchased as many do not have date stamps. What part of shall not be infringed or defense of themselves does the government of Vermont not understand.

If you really want to improve safety and security at schools and protect children then reduce entry to schools to one entrance, purchase and operate metal detectors manned by armed security or police. Have schools alarm all other entrances. Allow teachers to be psychologically screened, trained and armed. Yeah I know that all costs money and its so much easier and less expensive to tread all over law abiding citizens than do what will actually improve security.

Veto S55 and it's amendments Come to your senses and actually do something effective!!!!”

John Helfant
Roxbury, VT
802-522-7262

Sent: Sunday, March 25, 2018 10:21 AM
To: Maxine Grad
Subject: S.55

S.55 is constitutionally unsound and is a legal over reach. It protects no one. It punishes law abiding citizens in a state with almost no gun crime. Specifically section 8 is absurd and wrong. It seems to punish law abiding citizens while also hurting local businesses. I would hope that anyone with the interest of the people they are meant to serve in mind would NOT vote this ridiculous over reach into law.

Thanks for reading.

Josh Smith.

Sent: Sunday, March 25, 2018 10:40 AM
To: Maxine Grad
Subject: S.55 - please vote against

S.55 is constitutionally unsound and is a legal over reach. It protects no one. It punishes law abiding citizens in a state with almost no gun crime. Specifically section 8 is absurd and wrong. It seems to punish law abiding citizens while also hurting local businesses. I would hope that anyone with the interest of the people they are meant to serve in mind would NOT vote this ridiculous over reach into law.

Thanks for reading.

Katie Bromfield

Barre VT

Sent: Sunday, March 25, 2018 10:53 AM

Subject: Vote No on S. 55

I write you today to ask you to vote "NO" on S. 55.

I have lived in Vermont my whole life and grew up in a family where we learned to respect the power of firearms and how to properly use them. I have never felt safer anywhere than in Vermont and other states where Americans have the freedom to use, buy and carry firearms as the constitution recognizes. The statistics prove that we are on the top of the list for safest states in the nation, and this is because of the freedom respected with the current firearms laws allowing Vermonters to easily carry and purchase guns.

As a young woman, I find it empowering to be able to level the playing field and be able to protect myself from people bigger and stronger than me, even when I am by myself. I greatly appreciate programs that get women involved and educated about firearms such as the NRA's program, Women on Target. Professional woman shooters such as Julie Golob are an inspiration and break down the stereotypes of the "typical" gun owner. It would be a shame if you and the other leaders of our country decided that you could take away my freedoms and feeling of security that I experience living in this part of the country.

If more laws like those proposed are enacted, I would find very little incentive to stay here and continue to contribute to this state's economy and community.

Sincerely,

Bethany Trainque

Sent: Sunday, March 25, 2018 5:08 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S.55

I would like to kindly ask you to vote NO on S.55 and to vote NO on any new gun control laws.

S.55 is unnecessary and unconstitutional. S.55 also contains misinformation and is logistically incomplete. Several pieces have no construct for how the objectives will be accomplished. Other pieces are far too broad and leave too many questions unanswered.

This is a piece of legislation that Vermont has no need for.

Sincerely,

Deserae Morin

Concerned Vermont Resident

Hello all!

I am writing today, as I have repeatedly, with many questions reeling in my mind. I also have a

statement to make in regards to the suggested laws being proposed.

As a parent and life-long Vermont resident (aside from a nine month stint in West Virginia) I choose to stay in this lovely state of ours for many reasons. Those reasons are not limited to but include the continued safety of this state. The state of Vermont ranks consistently #1 and #2 safest states when it comes to gun violence. Amongst all the national tragedies, we as a state remain safe. Why? Because we have very strong community ties. We have neighbors we know and trust. We also have a stranger down the road who pays attention to the traffic on a back road. There is the person at the local grocery, who concealed carries, who will defend the innocent if there ever was a need to do so. With these proposed laws, we loose some of that.

Now for the infringement of rights...Every proposed gun law violates the Second Amendment of the Constitution of The United States. And more importantly, it violates Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution. You, as our elected officials, took an oath to defend both of these Constitutions. How can you rightly sit there and ignore your sworn duty?

I sit here and read about how you, our elected officials, are not listening to the people who put you in your position. I see the news articles about how the Sargeant At Arms Office is so overwhelmed with calls that log sheets are being created but not all of those sheets are being seen. I see how our Speaker of the House refuses to follow standard practice and hold a public hearing about certain bills. How is any of this fair? Or for that matter, legal? I am personally in a position where my Representative is in the hospital and has been for several months so my voice, as well as all his constituents, is not being heard. My Senator has spoken to me, assured me that the bills were dead where they stood, and then did the opposite.

I understand that you must also use your own conscience. But conscience is not the same as your emotions. Do the research, look at the facts. Laws are only followed by law abiding citizens. No matter how many laws you pass about drugs, we still have a huge problem with them. So how do you feel passing gun restriction laws are going to fix a problem that does not lie within the firearm?

Now I also ask how you feel changing these laws, by violating Constitutional RIGHTS, is going to affect the future of Vermont? I can see a Vermont with more criminals. I can see a Vermont with fewer youth being able to attend shooting sports events, because they do not have access to firearms that others get to use. I see a Vermont where hunters are not allowed to participate in quick, ethical hunting as they are not allowed to have the caliber rifle that the hunting here requires. I see a Vermont that no longer holds our youth here when they join the Armed Forces because this state feels that they are old enough to defend our country but not to purchase a firearm.

When law enforcement is telling you that what is being proposed is virtually unenforceable, there are very clear problems with the laws proposed. What law enforcement is telling you is the full truth. Universal background checks...there are far more firearms in this state than are on the registry. How can you enforce a background check on a private sale when there is no evidence of the firearm existing? Listen to your law enforcement. They are the ones who are on the streets, they are the ones who enforce laws, they are the ones who know what is virtually unenforceable.

And to finalize my statements, we the legal law abiding gun owners in this state of Vermont will remember who is trying to remove our rights. We will remember next time we go to the polls who chooses to ignore the ethical commitments. We promise to never forget those who choose to violate

the path they took to defend the Vermont and United States Constitutions.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any more clarification.

Brigham Lunn
Tunbridge, Vermont
brig.brian@gmail.com

.....
Subject: S.55

Good Morning,first let me say thank you to all who responded to my email last week, we all understand how big this issue has become. I have a question that many of us tradesmen and woman of Vermont simply don't get-how does this bill protect us from those who decide to hurt and kill ?.We all know that those who chose to injure or kill will do it with a rock, knife, car,bomb,-the list goes on.Many of us believe that we need to identify and prevent the individual from making this choice-thats how we curb behavior .Would a shark be less dangerous -if we placed him in a different type of water ?-no of coarse not !.Kids over the last twenty or so years, have been allowed to get away with so much, parents will make excuses, or blame teachers about their child's actions and behavior.Kids are placed on drugs to control behavior,coping skills are lost, being told no brings tantrums .The first step to help protect our kids, schools,and citizens is to bring together the teachers, doctors,and other experts to see how we can catch those heading to a bad place, and get involved.We all need to see something, say something-S.55 does nothing to protect us from those who choose to harm.....

Mike Spillane

.....
As a clinical psychologist and clinical neuropsychologist that has maintained a private practice in Vermont since 1979 I have a few concerns with SS55. Overall it is my professional opinion that this legislation is needed and necessary. In particular the provisions that mandate background checks will save lives. The provisions restricting high capacity magazines are also significantly essential. I realize that these restrictions may cause inconvenience and perhaps a few days delay in transferring a weapon. But it is this red tape that is potentially beneficial because it may slow down a mentally unstable individual and prevent a tragedy in Vermont. Unfortunately there are emotionally unstable individuals in Vermont and this legislation will go a long way in preventing them from causing murder and mayhem.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Steven Anthony Sola, Ph.D.

Vermont Licensed Psychologist-Doctorate

.....
Sent: Sunday, March 25, 2018 7:46 PM

Subject: No to S.55

I was born and raised in Vermont and have been involved with hunting fishing and the shooting sports my whole life. I have worked as a volunteer hunter safety instructor as well as a Lets go Fishing instructor for the Vt. Fish & Game Dept.

Most of the firearm violations in this state have been committed by felons and drug dealers most from out of state. The church shooting in Texas and the school shooting in Florida could have been prevented if the proper reporting procedures were followed. Padric Hartnell president of The Fraternal order of Police Chittenden County wrote a letter to the legislature stating their opposition to the rush of new gun control legislation being pushed through this session. They will continue to support the constitutional rights of Vermonters, they ask that we take an all encompassing look into larger issues rather than use firearms as a quick fix .

Respectfully,

David Trainque

.....

Hello,

I am writing in to say no to s55. I think that the least that could take place is a public hearing and a chance to understand both sides of this bill. This seems illogical to me. Being strict on those of us that pay our taxes and follow the law, infringing upon our rights, as well as making the possession of a firearm more difficult for us. I honestly do not believe this will be helping in any way. This seems to be another way of avoiding the true underlying issue of mental health in our country.

It is sad that we continue to blame guns for human's actions. My boyfriend's childhood hunting rifle passed down from his grandfather will now be unacceptable after passing this bill. There needs to be some education on guns done before passing this as well.

You can see even in the way the law is written using false terminology that there is not a true understanding. I think a better solution to this issue is mental help and gun education. No one has addressed what has taken place with those taking part in these shootings and the lack of help with their mental state. I also think that even if a class were to be given on the structure definition and safety of different guns (not necessarily bringing any actual guns into a school) this may bring much more awareness to our youth and bring back the respect that we all used to have for guns and their power. Most importantly a respect for human life and any firearm's ability to take that if not respected.

PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE MY OPINION. It has been so frustrating that I cannot take part in standing up for an issue that means so much to me. I am a small business owner in Vermont and cannot blow off clients to attend mid day last minute meetings. I also am a law abiding citizen that carries an "assault weapon" on me to work every day

purely for my own safety against these unaddressed mental health and drug issues. Please don't infringe upon my right to protect myself as this could make me the next victim.

Thank you,
Courtney Brassard

.....
I, along with many others, do NOT support any part of the S.55 bill. It is unconstitutional and unneeded.
I AM willing to move out of Vermont if this bill goes into effect. - Mykle Lape, Rutland, VT Resident.
.....

I'm writing this again to ask that you Vote no on the S55 bill this is so wrong on many levels please do not do this.. Vote No!

Thank you

David B. Broder

34 County Road

Windsor , VERMONT

05089
.....

Please note the message below and enter it into the record. Thank you.

Begin forwarded message:

From: VT Hunter <vthunter1@gmail.com>

Subject: S.55 Magazine Capacity Restriction

Date: March 24, 2018 at 9:41:42 AM EDT

To: mmacdonald@leg.state.vt.us

Dear Senator MacDonald,

Please vote against S55, as amended. The magazine capacity restriction is unnecessary and unenforceable. The original bill has become polluted with amendments, which have nothing to do with either unlawful or abandoned firearms. These proposals do nothing to address the REAL issues regarding mental health and school safety. It is clear that certain people are trying to take advantage of the current hysteria. Again, please vote against this bill.

Thank you.

Rick Moore

781 Rollie Day Road

Corinth VT 05039

Hello,

As a Vermont native it deeply saddens me to see this bill passed. Vermont always stood out among the rest as the ideal character in gun control. What we had worked and it showed the rest of the world that what we do and who we are is effective and patriotic. Now that this bill has passed it shows weakness. We have caved in to the rest of the world and now we are just another state that is running away from the problem. This bill is not the solution. We have not had a problem in the past with gun control so why change now? I understand that change is growth but this is not change for better. This bill cannot stop tragedy and will not make Vermont a better or safer place to live. I, as well as the majority of Vermonters do not support S55. We trust people such as yourself to do the right thing and this is the exact opposite. You are not representing the masses or our best interest. Please set aside your bias and avoid corruption. Make the right choice for Vermont and throw out S55. Thank you for your time.

-Tony Altobell

From: Aaron Cassidy

Sent: Saturday, March 24, 2018 10:08 AM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: I DO NOT support S.55.

I am writing this email to inform you I DO NOT approve of s.55. It is unfair to all the responsible people and gun owners out there. Most people in this state will highly agree.

As a true born and raised Vermonter I am very concerned that bill s.55 will pass. Most true Vermonters use their guns in order to put food on the table for their families, a lot of those guns (swing semi auto or not) have been passed down through generations. I was 12 years old when I was given my first rifle and gained my hunting license. I was taught responsibility with the use of a fire arm. I feel this bill is a HUGE infringement on citizens of Vermont personal property and ability to defend oneself. I push that the bill be turned down. There is no need for it. Besides....citizens of Vermont are buying up all firearms they can right now, creating a law will not change that. Creating a law will not stop criminals. The liberal agenda is a FARCE . A big joke at best.

Thank you for your time : Andy Myers , Pownal

VT

Good day,

I wanted to take the time to write you to let you know that I do not support S.55. I live in Rutland County, down here most if not all of the folks I come into contact with do not support this bill. As a combat veteran I have seen firsthand what firearms are and are not capable of regardless of the magazine capacity or style. Mass punishment for law abiding citizens is not the answer. Thank you in advance.

V/r,

Daric Brown

.....
From: Pete Smith [mailto:pete@techvt.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 24, 2018 8:29 AM
To: Mike Bailey
Subject: S.55

Please ensure that my NO opinion is added to the record of this bill.

.....
Good morning,

I am a young citizen of Burlington and am immensely concerned with Bill S.55 and any other gun legislation that might be in the works. There are multiple passages in our State and Federal constitutions that expressly prohibit what is being passed in this bill. In my few years of paying attention to politics I know that passing this bill is simply a stepping stone to further legislation, restriction, and bans as seen by what has happened in other states. Although i do not personally possess a firearm, i do enjoy spending time with my friends at the range and I do enjoy having the freedom to do as i please with the rights i have. I have never harmed anyone, everyone else that I have spent time with around firearms has never hurt anyone. The bill is riding on pure emotion and frenzy, and you all know it by voting no to a public hearing, because that public hearing would be opposed to what you want to believe. I know my voice is in a district that likely supports gun control but let it be known that there are many that do not. You are passing a bad solution to something that is not a problem and definitely has zero ability to prevent any type of shooting.

Please record my opposition to Bill S.55 and any future gun control legislation.

Sincerely,
Alex Unger

.....
I stand opposed to the passing of any new gun laws. The resources being spent on this non problem could be used to provide better school security and mental health issues. Personal responsibility and accountability need to be the focus. Any object can be weaponized so why punish law abiding citizens for the actions of those who don't care about your laws.

Randy L Martelle

Hello,

I am an 18 year old Vermonter who has lived in this state all of his life. I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking and everything to do with the outdoors. Passing this will take away my right to buy a gun for duck hunting, a new rifle for rabbit hunting or to buy one of my friends deer rifles off of him. What needs to be realized is that this will not stop any crime with a firearm; you could still illegally meet up and purchase a gun off of someone, you could still order 30rd magazines online. All it is going to do is make it very hard for people like me to continue being honest and law abiding citizens. Please reconsider this bill.

Foster Kent Rich

After having the pleasure of being in attendance at the hearing yesterday in Montpelier to watch a controversial law trying to be passed in the state of Vermont I was amazed to find out that this law does nothing to protect school children which we were being told was the original intent..

It became very obvious after much questioning of the man who presented this bill on the floor of the house that not much testimony was really taken by that committee regarding the effects of this bill on the Vermont public except to make honest people criminals by The Stroke of the pen.

It was exposed however that there were many faults in this bill and that it should not be passed.

It was pointed out several times that this bill does absolutely nothing to protect the school children in the state of Vermont all it does is attempt to make criminals out of the hard-working tax-paying law-abiding people in this state

I am asking each and everyone of you on this committee to vote no on this bill because it does absolutely nothing that is beneficial to the safety of people state of Vermont.

We are the safest state in the nation and we have always been one of the top three safest states in the nation.. there is no need to impose new gun laws in the state of Vermont.

After speaking with a legislators from Barry he finally had to admit most of the problems in Vermont are the results of suicide..

He also had to agree the taking guns away from the honest people will have no effect on suicides it will only force people to get into cars and kill other people while attempting to kill themselves..

Calvin Coolidge, president, from the state of Vermont said the following and it is something that everyone of you should read and read again and then think about what you are doing..

"It is better not to pass a good law then to pass a bad law."

Thanking you in advance,

Richard Ley

From: Kriston Hall

Sent: Friday, March 23, 2018 11:20 PM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: Current gun legislation.

The current round of legislation pertaining to gun rights in this state is a flagrant infringement upon the the bill of rights. I understand the current climate in the nation but further restrictions on law abiding gun owners are not the answer. Laws in other states similar to what is being proposed in Vermont have failed to stop mentally ill individuals from perpetrating violent acts. I am writing this email to formally state my opinion as a contituate of this state and implore you to not pass any new gun legislation in my home state. I was born and raised here, attended college here, own a home here, pay my takes here and I will look for another place where my rights are not curtailed by sensationalism.

From: Russ K [mailto:russwood1488@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, March 23, 2018 10:39 PM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: Gun legislation

No to everything.

No new laws! What we have, works.

Thanks,

Russell Kline

63 Montgomery RD

POWNAL, VT 05261

I am adamantly opposed to S.55, No new gun laws and a Public Hearing should be held as stipulated under Article 20 of the Vermont State Constitution.

Respectfully,

Bob Readie

Warren, VT

From: Tammy <vt.wildfire129@gmail.com>

Subject: Opinion on Proposed Vermont Gun Laws

Date: March 23, 2018 at 11:28:11 AM GMT-4

To: maxjq@wcvr.com

I oppose raising the age limit to 21 years old to purchase rifle's or firearms in general for that matter. If you are considered an adult at 18 years old, able to join the military, and become an independent responsible for your own actions, good or bad; you should be able to have all the rights of an adult to the fullest extent... no exceptions. I agree, everyone should go thru a background check; if you pass said check, your age at 18, should not make a difference as you are an adult.

With all that is going down these days (school, club, discrimination, flat out meaningless shootings), we, as upstanding

American Citizens have the right to protect ourselves. The laws we have in place now, does absolutely nothing to keep firearms out of the criminals hands; they will and do find a way to acquire them illegally no matter what laws are in place! If more law abiding American Citizens, who have the right to bear arms, carried; there would be quite a bit fewer deaths. The MD School shooting is the most recent prime example... potentially many lives saved, resource officer did his job. This could have been a repeat of the FL School Shootings that took the lives of 17 innocent people; that resource officer failed, we all know how that turned out; if those teachers were armed, the turnout could have been radically different.

I'm an adult female, raised around guns, as well as my children; being taught to respect weapons, and practice safety from the very beginning. I'm a very petite 5'2" 106 lbs woman, I take my Second Amendment rights very seriously; it is my right to protect myself against criminals from all walks of life, whether it be from a rapist, serial killer, intruder threatening my life or that of my family. Period.

From: dave <dave@blackpowder.farm>

Subject: Disrespecting my children

Date: March 23, 2018 at 11:30:07 AM GMT-4

How do I explain to my hard working, responsible volunteer firefighter in training, soon to be 18 years old that, even though he listened and has done everything right, a few neighbors have decided he isn't responsible enough to exercise his rights? (While he is learning how to face danger and save people, like you)

How do I explain to my hard working, responsible volunteer librarian, soon to be 18 years old that, even though she has listened and has done everything right, a few neighbors have decided she isn't responsible enough to exercise her rights?

Stop infantilizing the young adults of Vermont. You were from Rutland County. We're still responsible down here.

So really, what's your explanation to the responsible, honest and capable young adults of our state? Why do you see fit to infringe on their rights?

Sincerely,

David Soulia

Pittsford VT

To: Maxine Grad; Anthony Pollina; Ann Cummings; Francis Brooks; Tim Ashe; Anne Donahue; Janet Ancel; Ed Read; Christopher Pearson

Subject: You can't make this stuff up

From Arthur (NOT LINDA) Hendrickson in Moretown: In Vermont you can purchase a hunting license at 18 but there is a law in process that won't let you purchase a gun so they can go hunting. Please do not vote in favor for legislation such as this.

.....

To: <DGiambatista@leg.state.vt.us>, <dgonzalez@leg.state.vt.us>, <mgrad@leg.state.vt.us>, <maxig@wcvr.com>, <rgraham@leg.state.vt.us>, <rodnevrh@aol.com>, <shaas@leg.state.vt.us>, <shaas@sover.net>, <jharrison@leg.state.vt.us>, <helen@helenhead.com>, <mhebert@leg.state.vt.us>, <rhelm@leg.state.vt.us>, <mhigley@leg.state.vt.us>, <mhooper@leg.state.vt.us>, <maryshooper@gmail.com>, <JHooper@leg.state.vt.us>, <LHoughton@leg.state.vt.us>, <MHoward@leg.state.vt.us>, <kjessup@leg.state.vt.us>, <BJickling@leg.state.vt.us>, <mjohnson@leg.state.vt.us>, <BJoseph@leg.state.vt.us>, <bjuskiewicz@leg.state.vt.us>, <BKeefe@leg.state.vt.us>, <kkeenan@leg.state.vt.us>, <CKimbell@leg.state.vt.us>, <wkitzmilller@leg.state.vt.us>, <warren@kitzmilller.com>, <jkrowinski@leg.state.vt.us>, <rlaclair@leg.state.vt.us>, <mlalonde@leg.state.vt.us>, <lanpher@leg.state.vt.us>, <rlawrence@leg.state.vt.us>, <richlaw@kingcon.com>, <plefebvre@leg.state.vt.us>, <plewis@leg.state.vt.us>, <pattijlewis@myfairpoint.net>, <wlippert@leg.state.vt.us>, <elong@leg.state.vt.us>, <glucke@leg.state.vt.us>, <lucke4vt@gmail.com>, <tmacaig@leg.state.vt.us>, <macaig@msn.com>, <mmarcotte@leg.state.vt.us>, <jimkwik@surfglobal.net>, <mmartel@leg.state.vt.us>, <marcia_martel@hotmail.com>, <jmasland@leg.state.vt.us>, <jamesq56@yahoo.com>, <cmattos@leg.state.vt.us>, <cmccormack@leg.state.vt.us>, <pmccoy@leg.state.vt.us>, <jim_mccullough@myfairpoint.net>, <fmcfau@leg.state.vt.us>, <toppermcfau@aol.com>, <amiller@leg.state.vt.us>, <kmorris@leg.state.vt.us>, <mmorrissey@leg.state.vt.us>, <mmrowicki@leg.state.vt.us>, <mmrowicki@gmail.com>, <bmurphy@leg.state.vt.us>, <lmyers@leg.state.vt.us>, <lindakmyers@comcast.net>, <GNolan@leg.state.vt.us>

Dear Representative,

I urge you to vote against S.55 today. Vermont is the safest state in the nation with a strong history of responsible gun ownership. Imposing magazine restrictions on law-abiding gun owners erodes our natural rights as outlined in the Vermont Constitution and the US Constitution. Please do not try to fix what is not broken. Please preserve the rights and freedoms of Vermonters by voting against this bill.

Sincerely,

Mindy Wren

Concord, VT

.....

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: Gun Control

I am sixteen years old and I believe that restricting guns will do more harm than good. Simply writing a law will not take guns out of the hands of criminals. They are just that. . . Criminals. They don't care about the laws. Rape is illegal, yet women are still being raped. Being a female, I feel I should be able to protect myself. All this

will do is make purchasing guns harder for lawful gun owners. With all the recent school shootings that have been occurring around the country, we should be encouraging lawful citizens to carry guns. Imagine how many innocent teenagers would still be alive, if a law abiding citizen had a gun. Take the recent Maryland shooting as an example. A teenage boy came in with the intent to kill, but the only person who ended up dead was him. He only shot two people, one of which is unfortunately in critical condition. Thanks to a resource officer with a gun, many deaths may very well have been prevented. The point I am trying to get at here is, I want my friends, my family and myself to be safe. I don't want to be defenseless against a bad guy with a gun. Though in the Maryland situation, the officer heroically responded in a minute, we cannot rely on the police (of whom have guns) to come save us. In most situations, they will be to late. We need to protect ourselves.

Sincerely,

Alisha Armstrong

530 Millbrook Rd

Fayston VT, 05673

802-399-9848

.....
Please don't support S.55 or any other new gun legislation. We don't need it. The over-emotional knee jerk response to recent crimes committed with firearms in the U.S. is only serving efforts to take rights away from people, not to address the issues that led to the tragedies. I think politicizing and weaponizing tragic deaths in order to advance a political agenda is a disgusting tactic. That's what people are doing right now. Please stand up for Vermonters. Don't allow all of us to be punished for the transgressions of a few bad people. I don't want any of my rights taken away. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Regards,

MAURICE F. WOODWORTH IV
Montpelier Resident

.....
Good afternoon;

I am another "life long Vermonter" imploring you all to vote NO on S.55 as it has morphed and is unclear with all the additions and deletions during the poast couple of weeks. I would instead like to see a PUBLIC HEARING on this bill as a result to ensure clarity for exactly what its intent is and what could be hidden inside as a result because it certainly seems as though it's being pushed through very quickly. That in itself is a concern and the refusal to have a public hearing on this by Speaker Johnson is even more frustrating.

Please do the right thing for ALL Vermonter's and not just those who feel our strength and livelihood should be dictated by fear and outside influence.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness in this regard.

- Matthew Bagdy

Milton, VT

Subject: Re: Oppose S.55

Hello,

I am proud that my Rutland area senators stood their ground and voted NO in opposition of S.55
I am now hopeful that my house representatives will follow suit and vote NO, in opposition of S.55

Thanks you for your support!!

~ Nick Flanders

W. Rutland, VT.

From: Phil Hopkins <ak47vt@hotmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 23, 2018 12:46 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: no gun grab

fl shooter had 10 round magazines just more of them

Subject: S.55 Public Hearing Request and Thank You

This is my request for a Public Hearing.

*The statement of purpose in the bill DOES NOT reflect the content of the bill. **This is one of multiple FINDINGS in the bill that need to be CORRECTED in order to effectively make a difference.***

Thank you for your service to the people,

Kevin Kidd
Essex Resident

Hello,

I am proud that my Rutland area senators stood their ground and voted NO in
opposition of S.55 I am now hopeful that my house representatives will follow suit and
vote NO, in opposition of S.55

Thanks you for your support!!

~ Nick Flanders

W. Rutland, VT.

I respectfully urge you to vote NO on bill S.55. As a lawful gun owner, sportsman, and citizen of Vermont. I'm opposed to these gun restrictions. Vermont is one of the safest states in the country in regards to gun crimes, with one of the most relaxed gun laws. If you can answer this one question....

How are you going to get the "Criminal" to obey these laws?

In my opinion, you won't. That is why these restrictions would only effect law abiding people and I'm opposed to this.

Respectfully,
Andrew Weber

.....
Sir,

The bill before you S55 is nothing short of unconstitutional, I never thought I would see the day Vermont would ever try and ride rough shot over it's people. We are a safe and free people with no need for these laws that effect NO ONE but law abiding citizens. We can not pass laws based on fear and reaction , and tell me which one of these laws on this bill would have stopped any shooting that has taken place? NONE of them. This is nothing but bad law and you are not following the will of the people.

.....
Scott M Dobrowolski

I am opposed to the proposed bill S.55.

It is an infringement of the 2nd amendment.

My belief is this is nothing more than politicians, playing off the fears uneducated citizens as to the facts of gun control and violence!

This has been one of the freest and safest states in the nation, and now our rights as Vermonters to bear arms is in danger.

PUNISH CRIMINALS, NOT LAW ABIDING CITIZENS!

Regard,
Todd Emmell
Colchester, VT

.....
Dear Mr Bailey, please transmit this to the appropriate people and for the record.

"NO, in the most strenuous and vociferous terms, to S.55" !!

Respectfully,

Michael F. McGarghan Jr

111 Birch Ct

Burlington VT 05408

Honorably Retired Veteran of VT National Guard and U.S. Armed Forces.

Please vote NO on this bill.

It will do nothing to improve school safety and only harasses law-abiding citizens.

Thank you.

Karen Baldwin

I am opposed to proposed Bill S.55

Vermont has some of the least strict firearms laws and is one of the safest states

This bill will only infringe on law abiding citizens

Jeffrey Folb

Williston

Mike and the
House Judiciary Committee

I am a resident of Braintree Vt and would respectfully ask the House to reject Bill S55 or any new gun laws.

We have gun laws in place the work when enforce.

Thank you

Rick Grant

To: VT House Judiciary Committee

In the strongest possible terms I would like to say NO WAY NO HOW to S. 55. This monstrosity guts the very heart of Vermont culture. It is a New York/Massachusetts style abomination which in NO way reflects the will of Vermonters, but rather that of Michael Bloomberg and his anti 2A billions. This is NOT the work of grassroots Vermonters, but out-of-state interests assassinating the few liberties Vermonters have left.

I oppose S. 55 absolutely and unequivocally. I would implore you to do the same this election year.

Most Sincerely,

Alex Knight

Marlboro

Subject: S.55

Good Afternoon,

This bill as currently proposed is totally wrong for Vermont and is only a feast for lawyers.

This bill should be left 'on the wall'.

Sincerely,

Marcia Marble

Roy Marble

Morrisville, VT

Please do not consider S.55.

Enough with the mob mentality. Stop the gun grab.

Respectfully,

Brett Bundock

From: Peter Moreman [mailto:moremanp@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 4:55 PM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: S.55 please vote no on this bill

I writing to ask you to vote no on S.55. Vermont sportsman have proved time and time again we are the most responsible gun owners in the US. Please do not punish us because of one sick persons actions.

Thank you.

Good evening. Please relay this message to the committee.

I moved to St. Albans from CT in 2010 to my family lake house on Hathaway point. My grandfather was born in St. Albans in. 1908 I have long roots here. Vermont has a proud 230 year history of being able to trust your neighbor. I met the love of my life and bought a home here in 2015. Please do not

Turn Vermont into CT. You took an oath to protect the Vermont constitution and you are breaking that oath. Please vote no on S55. I will not comply with this unlawful gun

grab you will make a criminal out of a law abiding house hold. Article 16 protects us from this. Stand by your oath. Vermont is different from other states. We trust our neighbors. We are smart enough and reasonable enough to own and sell any fire arms. We do not sell to criminals. And criminals will not buy from a law abiding citizen. We have proved this over the past 230 years being one of the safest states in the country. None of you were voted in with this as your agenda. No Vermont law maker has ever survived a assault on our right. This is election year. We will remember all of you that stood against Vermont. This is the line in the sand for all of us.

NO to S55.

Thank you for your time. Have a good day.

.....
In my 70 plus years of living in Vermont, this is the most ridiculous bill that I have ever seen proposed .. its supporters should be Tarded and Feathered and run out of our state

..
Robert Howe

.....
From: Luke Stepno >

Subject: NO on bill S.55

Date: March 15, 2018 at 3:04:42 PM GMT-4

Making good people helpless won't make bad people harmless
.....

To whom it may concern,

My name is Ariane Dulski and I live in Pittsford, Vermont. I am writing to you today to share that I am against the Bill S.55 regarding firearms. I am sure you have heard all of the opposing arguments such as, "guns don't kill people, people kill people", car accidents result in more death/injury, etc. Instead I will tell you my specific interest in the second ammendment.

I am a 28 year old female that stands at 5'4", about 130 pounds. I am alone 12 out of 14 nights due to my fiance working second shift. If I am alone and an intruder walks in I will not be able to defend myself while I wait for the cops to come without some sort of tool(s). Exercising my second ammendment right would be my LAST resort, but I am very grateful to have it as an option. There have been documented cases of an Armalite Rifle (AR) being used in home defense.

My fiance and I also raise chickens which are susceptible to many predators. As protection to my flock and myself while I am out there in the dark hours making sure that they have food and water especially during these snowstorms, I am a target for a predator. Again using my second ammendment right as a LAST resort, I am once again happy to have this option.

Vermont is a beautiful state in which hunting is a large sport. ArmaLite Rifles (ARs) chambered in an appropriate caliber are great hunting rifles for smaller statures such as myself and young children learning to hunt. Many hunting rifles are too large, heavy, and have a recoil that is too powerful for smaller statures like myself. I would like to be able to have future generations enjoy hunting without being scared of the recoil.

Last but not least, Vermont has a relatively low crime rate when compared to other states. Cities like Chicago which have strict gun laws are no stranger to crime.

School shootings are very unfortunate and should not occur, but are much larger than gun control alone. Other buildings such as hospitals are also susceptible to incidents.

What I would LOVE TO SEE happen in Vermont as well as other states, would be to increase mental health resources. I find it very unfortunate that our population with mental health illnesses are unable to easily access resources to get the help they need and deserve. After Irene, our mental health resources have not been the same. In addition, I would love to see increased security in buildings such as schools and hospitals.

I ask that each and every one of you in these seats take a look at the WHOLE picture rather than just one small piece of a large puzzle.

Thank you for your time,

Ariane

.....
I strongly oppose S.55 and any new gun laws. These proposed laws look to punish the majority of Vermont's law abiding gun owners. They do nothing to address the problems. Laws are only obeyed by law-abiding citizens. Anyone wanting to do harm to another, which I believe is already against the law, will use whatever means they can to carry it out. These are trying times for everyone and those in office should be listening to the people they represent and not out of state interests that are throwing money at a problem that Vermont does not have. Respectfully
Frederick Ray West
Rutland, VT
.....

Subject: NO NEW GUN CONTROL!!

Honorable Representatives of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Archie Flower. I was born and raised in Middlebury Vermont, and currently reside in New Haven Vermont. I'm writing to state that I'm a gun owner, I vote, and I oppose all "gun control" (which is actually PEOPLE control!) in the state of Vermont.

The issue is simple on its face – there should be NO law which hinders or punishes a law abiding peaceful person from owning a firearm for *ANY* lawful, peaceful purpose which they desire. When you

The events that are driving the desire by the legislature and those who have a fear of firearms were not committed by people in the act of self-defense. They were committed by people intent upon harming others. This is not a tool problem. This is a human problem. It is those perpetrators that should be persecuted and prosecuted to the maximum extent of the law. To sanction law abiding citizens, which is the ONLY effect gun control measures accomplish, are removal of a constitutional right without due process.

Again, I implore you to NOT support ANY so called "Gun Control" Legislation and especially ask you to NOT support Bill S.55.

Thank you.

Richard Wood
145 Birchwood Drive
Colchester, Vermont 05446

Subject: 2018 VT S. 55

Ms. Grad,

I am writing this email hoping you see it in time before the vote on Vermont's proposed assault weapons ban. This bill should not pass. It is horribly over reaching, unfair, unacceptable, an absolute false sense of security and will make thousands of Vermonters criminals overnight for no good reason. This will cause tons of unneeded contention towards law enforcement and law makers, because of the obvious and all too common exceptions that get wrtreen in for them. By no means should this bill pass, by no means should a few choose to make thousands criminals overnight.

Thanks for the time

Michael Kerr

Castleton, Vermont

714 766 9854

From: Luke Stepno <steppy.vt@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 3:04 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: NO on bill S.55

Don't NY my Vermont gun rights

Subject: NO WAY NO HOW TO S.55!

No to S.55
Brian T Heybyrne
492 Elm St
Chester VT
05143
(802)289-9904

From: Jeffrey Kaufman, M.D. <chai613@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 3:27 PM

To: Mike Bailey

Cc: Tim Ashe; Philip Baruth; Christopher Pearson; Michael Sirotkin; Virginia Lyons; Debbie Ingram; Maxine Grad; Chip Conquest; Tom Burditt; Selene Colburn; Eileen Dickinson; Kimberly Jessup; Martin LaLonde; Kiah Morris; Barbara Rachelson; Gary Viens; Janssen Willhoit

Subject: NO to S.55

NO, in the most strenuous and vociferous terms, to S.55 !!

Respectfully,
Jeffrey Kaufman MD
21 N Willard St
Burlington, VT 05401

S.55 has gone from very bad to ridiculous. You have people who know absolutely nothing about guns trying to dictate laws about them. You also have kids complaining about wanting to be safe in school. I agree that they should be safe but taking guns from law abiding people is not the answer. In the planed attack in VT everything was done right to keep the school safe. That is how it should be, not making laws that will not make a difference with those who do not obey the laws.

PLEASE VOTE NO ON S.55

Harland Blodgett
Underhill

Subject: NO WAY to S.55!

This is the worst amendment and bill I have witnessed in all my years as a Vermonter. The current body under the dome should be ashamed this was even introduced!

It is hard to believe infringing upon the rights of citizens seems to be simply commonplace discussion these days. How about working towards real solutions as opposed to foolishness like LaLonde's amendment and "UBC"??

Please do the right, moral and just thing...dismiss this nonsense and never bring it up again.

Sincerely,
Rob Ashton
Underhill, VT

.....
Subject: Bill # S.55

I am requesting that you vote NO to #S.55. I wish that I had the time to sit and have the discussion about guns that, many law abiding gun owners in Vermont were promised but never happened. I will keep it short. I see outside money and forces making an attempt to further restrict gun ownership, accessories, storage of guns, styles of guns, and anything to do with guns; for law abiding Vermont citizens. DO NOT make me a CRIMINAL like New York state has done to many of it's citizens. Please base any decisions on true facts and not emotion. Vote NO on #S.55 - Thank you. Respectfully
Richard C. Hatch - White River Junction, Vermont

.....
As a responsible gun owner, I am opposed to S55 and encourage a no vote.

Gerald Martin
215 Whitewater Circle
Williston, VT 05458

.....
From: Peter Larsen <larsen222@yahoo.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 3:58 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S.55

Dear Maxine,

Please vote no to S.55

Thank you,
Peter Larsen

.....
I wish to record my opposition to the bill S 55 which is before your committee.

Thank you for your consideration to my opposition to bill S 55.

William P. Mayo

.....
Dear Clerk,

Please convey my vehement opposition to S55 to the Judiciary Committee.

Advise them to remember Peter Smith!

Gregory Parke

Fair Haven, VT

.....
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: Gun Control, S55 etc. etc. etc.

Say no to **any** new attempts at infringing on the constitutional right to keep and bear arms. These are not "common sense" school safety solutions, they are very thinly veiled attempts at circumventing constitutional rights no more, no less. The word infringe is very unambiguous. There is no translation necessary. It means the same now as it did in 1776. There is no way to misunderstand this word, only bastardize it with malicious intent regarding a right that was so important that only the right of free speech precedes in the Constitution of the United States. This is not about hunting, no it is so much more than that. This is about a society with the freedom to confront tyranny and fulfill it's destiny as an example of what a people can become if allowed to pursue, life, liberty and happiness in a respectful society.

Most sincerely,

Patrick Finnie

.....
To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S.55

Representative Grad,

I strongly oppose S.55 and any new gun laws. These proposed laws look to punish the majority of Vermont's law abiding gun owners. They do nothing to address the problems. Laws are only obeyed by law-abiding citizens. Anyone wanting to do harm to another, which I believe is already against the law, will use whatever means they can to carry it out. These are trying times for everyone and those in office should be listening to the people they represent and not out of state interests that are throwing money at a problem that Vermont does not have.

Respectfully
Frederick Ray
West Rutland, VT

.....
Dear Mr Bailey,

I was up in the State House room #30 on Tuesday afternoon while there was some discussion still going on about testimony of a bill on estates and stuff before a young man named "Jace Laquiree"(sp?) that used the little of the remaining amount time that other bill already passed.

We asked about how to speak and we're told to submit testimony for the record.

I don't feel many parts of his testimony reflected at all my opinions and those of many others who attended the UVM Public Discussion he referred to as being his group that he represented.

None of us were asked by poll, survey, or otherwise our opinions and I was frankly surprised at some of his remarks that indicates that as a group we we're supporting or in agreement with.

I am very concerned about this fast tracking of S.55 that now has an amendment included and want to know how to go about submitting my thoughts and supporting reasons for why I oppose this Bill and it's amendments.

I cannot attend any the daily meetings because of many obligations, but if you have scheduled times available next week available, maybe later in the week I might be able otherwise I will have to submit my testimony by email or phone.

I myself have served in the Vermont National Guard until I retired and most of my career I served in military marksmanship programs as well as volunteering for 10 years as a Vermont Hunter Safety Course Instructor for the Department of Fish and Game / Wildlife.

I have been a range safety officer, and served overseas in combat with an actual "Assault Weapon", not one of the fake ones, you hear erroneously identified as in the news frequently.

I haven't been able to come as often to attend the business in the State House, but I have been in touch with my representatives and senators from my District and County.

As such, I believe I have a very qualified opinion on the subject matter before the committee, as a father, grandfather and member of the community who also is concerned about the issues raised, yet also wish to bring a check with those concerns about fears against the realistic impact of what results can impact us afterwards.

I have previously been to Montpelier to voice my testimony on bills years ago regarding legislation Burlington had submitted for the legislature to approve their ban on certain items marks on ballot initiatives for ordinances (2014?)

Thankfully, the legislature was wise and gave no approval at that time.

I hope that we can save the State from a highly divisive time, by quickly quelling bills like these when cool heads can discuss and listen with honest and open minds.

The Constitution of the State and the US should not be given back seat to the emotional states of current and future affairs.

Respectfully,

Michael F. McGarghan Jr.
111 Birch Ct
Burlington VT 05408

(802) 233-1238

I am requesting a NO vote on S.55. More laws will not stop random acts of violence and law abiding gun owners should not be penalized for the actions of a few individuals set on committing heinous crimes. As it is, not all prohibited persons are being charged criminally in federal court when caught with firearms. If you doubt this, check with the local ATF agent. Criminals will always find ways of obtaining guns illegally, this is something we can't stop. Thank you for your time.

Christopher Truhan

Hello,

I am sending you this email to ask that you respectfully oppose S.55.

Thank You!

-James Barger
Resident of Pomfret, VT

Hello

In respect to the new proposed gun laws.

I feel the problem is not the gun but the people behind them. Many crimes would not have been committed if the current rules and regulations were followed. Please vote no to change our current gun laws.

Thank you
Kirk Kehoe
Sparky Electric LLC
527 Abbott Rd
Windham VT. 05359
O/F - 802 875-7232
Cell- 802 384-7232

Hello

I strongly oppose S.55

Sincerely, Justin Farrar

Please, no knee jerk reactions on gun violence. Our laws are adequate we just don't enforce them the way they need to be. We need to get Doctors permission (and perhaps the guts) to diagnose mental illness for those that shouldn't have guns. We

don't blame cars for accidents so why would we blame a gun? I have several guns and none of them has snuck out of the house to hurt someone.

Mike Jennings

Newbury, VT
802-279-6815

.....
Please I ask for a no vote on S55, these gun laws would only harm law abiding citizens and do noting to stop illegal use!

Please take the emotions out of law making and use common sense.

Jim Mauchly
Mountain Graphics Photography
www.mountaingraphics.com
802-333-9010
802-222-7842 (cell)

.....
Hello,

I am writing you today to please vote no on bill S.55. I feel this is unnecessary legislation against my rights.

Thank you.

Warren Collins
W.C.Machine LLC
Guildford, VT
508 577 3686

.....
This is a total violation of Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution and in direct violation of the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution. Rep. LaLond took an oath to support and defend both upon taking his place in the legislature. I strongly oppose this bill and recommend that all legislators uphold their oaths of office or resign. Please add my name to the Vermont residents who adamantly reject this infringement of my Constitutional rights as outlined and guaranteed in The Bill of Rights and Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution.

Sincerely,
Dan DeCoteau
A Vermont registered voter

.....
Greetings

I respectfully request that you vote NO on, or oppose bill S•55.

Thank you,
Scott McPherson

I am writing this email hoping you see it in time before the vote on Vermont's proposed assault weapons ban. This bill should not pass. It is horribly over reaching, unfair, unacceptable, an absolute false sense of security and will make thousands of Vermonters criminals overnight for no good reason. This will cause tons of unneeded contention towards law enforcement and law makers, because of the obvious and all too common exceptions that get wrtten in for them. By no means should this bill pass, by no means should a few choose to make thousands criminals overnight.

Thanks for the time

Michael Kerr

Castleton, Vermont

[714 766 9854](tel:7147669854)

Vermont has always been one of the safest states in the nation just the way it is, we don't need to turn Vermont into another New York, the second amendment protects ALL other rights!

Larry Lockerby
IsleLaMotte, VT

To the Vermont House Judiciary Committee,

As a resident of Hartland, Vermont, A father, a business owner, and an advocate for the Second Amendment, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 55 as originally introduced and as amended.

-Wes Raney

I strongly oppose bill S.55 as it would in my opinion greatly hinder my 2nd amendment rights.

Thank you,

Alan Bowser

bowser4406@gmail.com

Mr Bailey:

Please vote no on bill S.55.

We do not need a ban on semi-auto guns. I love to hunt and that is what I use.

I also believe in Home defense and love VT.

I plan to vote out anyone he supports this Bill.

Regards,

Bill Burch, MD, PhD, MA

Vote no on bill S-55 please. We really do not need any new gun control laws in Vt. The reason the incident in Florida happened is because law enforcement did not do their job. He was mentally deranged.

Lee Domina

Dear Mr. Bailey

Please make sure you notify all members of the VT House Judiciary Committee of my strong objection to S.55

Thank You,

Jessica Kaufman

21 N Willard

Burlington, VT 05401

NO, in the most strenuous and vociferous terms, to S.55 !!

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Kaufman MD

21 N Willard St

Burlington, VT 05401

From: charlie shapiro [mailto:charlie36a@yahoo.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 3:26 PM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: S.55

I wish to state my strong opposition to S.55. Please also note that my wife, Deanna Shapiro, expresses the same opinion. Thank you. Charlie

Good afternoon,

I don't know who to contact about this so I'm contacting as many people as possible. Please do not let the amendment to S.55, the magazine and weapons ban, pass. I don't feel it will do much good to stop mass shootings. The boy from Fair Haven that wants to shoot up the school he attended said in his interview with police, he can buy a handgun off the dark web, so nothing in this bill would stop someone from doing this, as that's already illegal. I think it would create more problems than it would solve, and a black market for banned guns and magazines in this state would be quick to rise. We

can all agree we don't want anymore shootings, and there are some things we can change, but I don't think this is the right way to go about it. I was born in this state and I've spent almost all of 23 years here, I'm a voter, a municipal employee, a first responder, and a safe, responsible gun owner. I grew up in a big hunting family and was taught from a very young age that guns, like vehicles and power tools, can be very dangerous if you aren't safe and responsible with them. I feel there's a lot of other factors at play with these shootings, mental health being a huge one. So please, if you can do something to stop this, do so, there's another route we can take that won't affect those of us who haven't done anything wrong.

Thank you,
Alexander Bilka
802-733-1151

From: Paul H. Gross, III [mailto:phg3@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 3:11 PM
To: Mike Bailey
Subject: NO to S55

May please add my name to the list of people that oppose S55 !!
Unnecessary and probably unConstitutional.

To The House Judiciary Committee:

No to S.55. This is a deplorable Bill that will do NOTHING to protect our Schools, our children and victims. That's have some intelligent common sense. Vermont is a cultural leader for some 200 years. Hunting, shooting, sport shooting, target shooting and providing strong firearms training to Women and Youth Hunters. Let's keep Vermont as is.

From all of the dedicated sportsman's, women and youth in Vermont.

Thank You

Tim Ordway
Bennington

Subject: S.55

I wish to express a very definite " NO " to the bill S.55 introduced today.

We do not need any further gun laws in Vermont. We need to address the person/people and the separate, horrendous acts

that these sick individuals are committing. By addressing these acts and the perpetrator/s, in a court of law with enforced, stiff penalties for

murdering innocent victims, will send a message to the guilty parties involved. DO NOT infringe on every one's rights that are law abiding.

DO ALL THE STATES WITH THESE SUPER STRICT LAWS AND BANS ON FIREARMS HAVE NO CRIME ? VERMONT HAS FEWER CRIMES

BECAUSE THE CRIMINALS KNOW, THE LAW ABIDING CITIZEN IS ABLE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES.

I DO VOTE AND WILL BE CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZING WHO IS SUPPORTING THESE FOOLISH EXTRA GUN LAWS.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

RICHARD BOUDREAU
FRANKLIN, VT

.....
From: VTFSC Information <Communicator@VT2a.org>

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 2:07 PM

To: Maxine Grad

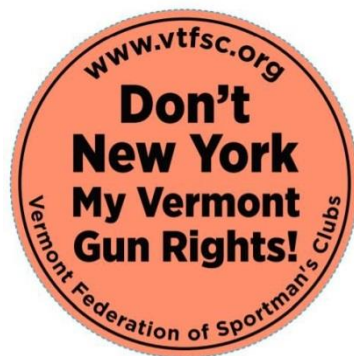
Subject: The Gun Ban is Here In Vermont ! Take Action!



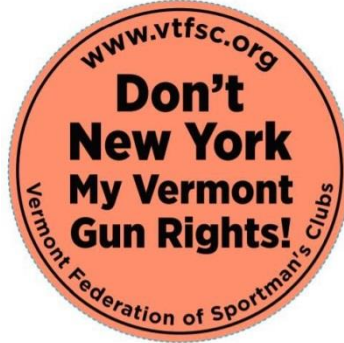
Vermont Sports

Proudly Ser

Maxine --



ACTION



ALERT

Contact the members of the House Judiciary Committee and tell them to **OPPOSE** the LaLonde Amendment to S.55.

This amendment bans rifles for cosmetic reasons
sets a 10 round magazine capacity limit
creates a ten-day waiting period for firearms purchases
requires safe storage of all firearms
It will make most semi-automatic handguns illegal.

This is how these people work the process is:

1. Limit 2. Register 3. Confiscate

That is exactly how it has gone down in California and New York

Don't offer to plead or negotiate for less worse terms: "No to S.55"

Call the Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and ask for a message saying

NO HOW NO WAY TO S.55

House Judiciary members:

Rep. Maxine Grad, Chair (mgrad@leg.state.vt.us)

Rep. Charles Conquest, Vice Chair (cconquest@leg.state.vt.us)

Rep. Thomas Burditt, Ranking Member (tburditt@leg.state.vt.us)

Rep. Selene Colburn (SColburn@leg.state.vt.us)
Rep. Eileen Dickinson (dickdickinson@comcast.net)
Rep. Kimberly Jessup (kjessup@leg.state.vt.us)
Rep. Martin LaLonde (mlalonde@leg.state.vt.us)
Rep. Ruqaiyah "Kiah" Morris (kmorris@leg.state.vt.us)
Rep. Barbara Rachelson (brachelson@leg.state.vt.us)
Rep. Gary Viens (gviens@leg.state.vt.us)
Rep. Janssen Willhoit (jwillhoit@leg.state.vt.us)

VTFSC Information

<http://csbvtfsc.nationbuilder.com/>

VT Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs · United States

This email was sent to mgrad@leg.state.vt.us. To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).

Created with [NationBuilder](#), software for leaders.

From: Mykle Lape <mjlgaming97@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 2:11 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: I am opposed to Representative LaLonde's amendment to S55

Hello, my name is Mykle Lape and I am a 20 year old Rutland citizen. I am writing to all Representatives of the Rutland districts in hopes that my words may change some opinions and reach a larger audience. This email needs no response but if you wish to respond feel free to do so. I want to let every representative, irregardless of political party, know my (along with many other proud Vermonters) opinion on Representative LaLonde's amendment to S55.

(<https://legislature.vermont.gov/.../S.55~Erik%20FitzPatrick~P...>)

I have never reached out to any government official expressing my opinions in the past for fear it may never reach anyone or accomplish anything but where I draw the line is when I feel my freedom and rights are being violated. Two of my grandfathers (one biological) have fought first hand for our country's freedom in the past only to see this generation of politicians try and strip it away by infringing on the second amendment.

Banning magazines that hold over 10 rounds and banning semi auto rifles only keeps them away from law abiding citizens who want to protect themselves instead of criminals whose sole definition is a person who breaks the law. It's absurd to think that criminals (who are willing to break the law) will suddenly follow gun laws. I am not going to sit back and let the anti-gun politicians strip our freedom and rights away one by one because some mentally ill kid across the country used firearms illegally. Vermont, I am happy to say, is 48th out of the 50 states for firearm deaths as of a 2016 study.

We need our guns to protect ourselves and families as so many Vermonters do. One fun fact is there are arguably more guns than people in the United States, one thing everyone can agree on is, guns don't disappear just because a bunch of politicians sign a piece of paper. Guns would still be easy to get for criminals and if the state of Vermont doesn't trust its denizens (including me) enough with firearms, I along with some good people I know are moving straight out of here to a state that does trust us. When a representative takes office I can only imagine they swear to uphold the Constitution as the Constitution is NOT a suggestion but what many of the anti-gun representatives don't seem to understand is in the 2nd amendment it specifically states that the right of the people to bear arms will NOT be infringed.

I believe any laws of this nature proposed are unconstitutional and should result in the removal of oneself from office. After our guns are taken away I can only imagine what comes next, my guess is our freedom of speech.

There are so many ways to combat gun violence and stop future potential school shootings but people want to go straight to banning weapons that we have a RIGHT to own. The media makes semi auto rifles out to be weapons of mass destruction and pass around ridiculously false info about them to fear monger the public. This however, couldn't be further from the truth as the real statistics don't lie. I don't think a nation owning so many guns, weaponized vehicles, tanks, aircraft, ships, and so much more including nuclear warheads has any room to tell it's citizens it can't own simple semi automatic firearms for home defense. That is hypocritical and the banning of said weapons is borderline tyranny especially consider semi automatic rifles only make up 3% of violent gun crimes and the AR15 being even a smaller category within that.

If any representatives receiving this email wish to contact me about my ideas on how to keep people safe without outright banning weapons just send me an email. In the mean time please consider my words and share them with whoever you can. I want to be proud to be a Vermonter again but the truth is I have never been so scared as I am for the potential loss of my freedom and rights. Thanks for your time in reading a young adults words.

.....
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 WAY TO S.55

House Judiciary members,

I am a Fairfax, VT resident and employee with the Department of Public Safety for the State of VT and I am asking you to please OPPOSE the LaLonde Amendment to S.55!!!!

Thank you,

Robert Driscoll

.....
From: Karol Buchanan <karol.buchanan@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 2:12 PM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: s55

I would like to respectfully say NO to the bill S55 . Thank you . Karol
.....

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: Please vote down bill S.55

Dear Curt.

I am writing to you today to express my opposition to bill S.55 proposing to ban semi-automatic firearms and magazine capacities above 10 rounds. Vermont has almost always been the #1 safest state in America, so I see NO reason for any more legislation against us law-abiding citizens. The knee-jerk reactions to solve problems that do not exist here are getting really out of hand. Why am I going to be punished for the actions of others?

We all know the FBI and law enforcement severely dropped the ball in Florida last month. Why am I to be restricted because THEY failed to do their jobs???

Universal Background Checks for private sales does nothing but raise the prices of private sales. Criminals will be criminals, and will always procure weapons regardless of what laws are passed. There are no numbers that prove the UBC actually prevents crime. Period. Law abiding Vermonters police our own. I personally have denied a sale of a firearm to a person that I didn't feel right about. Something didn't feel right about this person's emails, so I did some online searching and found an arrest document for this person and denied the sale. NOBODY wants firearms in the hands of people who shouldn't have them, but people who shouldn't have them will ALWAYS find a way, regardless of legislation.

10 round magazine limits have been debunked numerous times and prove that mass shootings and the likes are not affected by capacity limits. Case in point, the recent Florida attacker used LOW-capacity, 10 round magazines. Had Stephen Willeford of Sutherland Springs, Texas been limited to a 10 round magazine, he might not have been able to stop that lunatic from continuing to shoot up the church, and possibly move onto additional targets.

Self defense is a fundamental human right and is supported by the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the Sate of Vermont. I'm not going to quote the Second Amendment, nor Article 16, as we both know exactly what they mean. ANY firearm control bills are flat out UN-Constitutional and UN-American!

Please vote NO to ANY and ALL new gun "control" bills.

Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Brian Paskevich

Colchester, VT

bpaskevich@yahoo.com

From: Robin Morgan <robinmorgan@wsesu.org>

Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2018 9:37 PM

To: Governorvt@vermont.gov; Mitzi Johnson; Tim Ashe

Cc: Becca Balint; Jeanette White; Mollie Burke; Tristan Toleno; Valerie Stuart; Philip Baruth; Richard

Sears; Joe Benning; David Sharpe; Albert Pearce; Maxine Grad; Chip Conquest;
rebecca.holcombe@vermont.gov; nmace@vtvsba.org; jfannon@vtnea.org; jfrancis@vtvsa.org
Subject: Brattleboro Town School Board Gun Violence Prevention Resolution

To: Governor Phil Scott, Speaker Mitzi Johnson, Pro Tempore Tim Ashe
From: Brattleboro Town School Board

As you are undoubtedly aware, schools have become a target of mass shootings. Vermont is not immune to this, as evidenced by the recent threats in Fair Haven, as well as several others around the state.

We take our responsibility, as elected officials, to ensure the safety of our school children and employees very seriously. Students have the right to attend school and feel safe from the threat of gun violence. Parents have the right to send their children to school and know that they will come safely home at the end of the day. Teachers have the right to come to work concerned with educating students, not worrying about protecting them from gunfire.

We have made all reasonable updates to our buildings, equipment, and protocols to make our schools secure. In addition to security measures, students and teachers spend more time participating in lockdown drills that they could otherwise spend learning and it is provoking anxiety and fear in children, staff, and parents. And yet as the recent tragedy in Parkland, Florida showed us, even these measures are not enough to prevent someone with an AR-15 from coming in and killing students and teachers. The only way we can do that is with the help of our government to stop gun violence.

Therefore, we, the Brattleboro Town School Board, resolve that our elected officials in the Vermont House and Senate must pass common-sense gun violence prevention legislation during the 2018 legislative session, and that Governor Scott must sign such legislation into law to take effect immediately.

We urge the consideration and passage of the strongest possible legislation currently before the Vermont House or Vermont Senate focused on raising the legal age to purchase firearms to 21, universal background checks, removing guns from the scene of a domestic violence crime, enabling law enforcement officers to get an order to remove guns when a person shows signs of threat and danger and prohibiting bump-fire stocks for firearms. Passing these bills into law is a first step toward effective gun violence prevention legislation that protects our students.

In addition, we urge the drafting and passage of legislation that has been proposed in previous legislative sessions, which would prevent the possession, sale, or manufacture of military-style semiautomatic rifles.

Finally, we urge Governor Scott to allow Vermont to join the coalition "States for Gun Safety" formed by our neighbors in New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Jersey to trace and intercept illegal guns and enhance information gathering.

These actions are long overdue. We need your help to keep our students and staff safe. This is our moral responsibility as elected officials. Let's work together to create a peaceful and safe environment for the school children of Vermont.

Robin Morgan, Jill Stahl Tyler, Kimberly Price, Spoon Agave, David Schoales

cc:

Senators Becca Balint and Jeannette White

Representatives Mollie Burke, Valerie Stuart, and Tristan Toleno

Senator Phil Baruth, Senate Education Committee

Senators Dick Sears and Joe Benning, Senate Judiciary Committee

Representatives Dave Sharpe and Albert Pearce, House Education Committee

Representatives Maxine Grad and Charles Conquest, House Judiciary Committee

Secretary Rebecca Holcombe, Vermont Agency of Education

Nicole Mace, Vermont School Boards Association

Jeff Fannon, Vermont-National Education Association

Jeff Francis, Vermont Superintendents' Association

.....
To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S55

I wanted to add my opinion to this latest bill that has suddenly been brought up.

To keep it simple, I am directly opposed to it and any variation of said bill. I work in law enforcement in this state and can tell you this will have no effect other than to penalize law abiding folks.

Sincerely

Greg Jones

99 Overlake Dr

Milton VT

.....
I want to convey my concerns for gun control legislation being considered in the wake of recent school shootings. I am a father, a liberal, a student of political science, and have an MS in Public Policy Analysis. I'm a fierce defender of the Constitution (the document that empowers our government) and

the Bill of Rights (the document that limits the powers of the government by recognizing the inherent rights of individuals).

I understand politicians desire to take action. I understand the public's desire for actions to be taken by politicians. I don't understand why forces on the right and left seem willing to pick and choose which rights they are willing to sacrifice for their favorite interest groups.

The problem comes when there is no clear course of action to address whatever the public might be clamoring for at any given moment. There is additional trouble when there is an interest group that recognizes an opportunity to take advantage on a situation. I believe in this case the gun control groups are hoping to capitalize on the recent school shooting tragedies.

If you really wanted to protect our students in schools, do something that may actually make a difference, provide security for our schools...this is what we do for all other facilities we deem worthy of protection, Court houses, government buildings, banks, jewelry stores. Why not? It's expensive? Aren't our kids aren't worth it? Some would rather exploit the situation by eroding our constitutional rights...shame on them!

Maybe focus on addressing the factors twisting some people into being mass murderers...family, community and cultural alienation, the lack of compassion in our institutions, the glorification of violence by our entertainment and news sources and excessive violence used by our police.

The Second Amendment is a sacred part of our constitution designed to prevent a tyrannical government...it is not something to be eroded...none of our rights are. Sure, no right is absolute...we already have limits on Second Amendment rights (military weapons, heavy arms, fully automatic weapons, possession by felons, etc.), but anyone who has read the Federalist papers knows the purpose of the Second Amendment is not hunting or personal protection (as legitimate as those pursuits are), but the ability of an armed populace to resist the threat of a tyrannical government...you know, the kind of governments that have oppressed the majority of humans throughout history. That isn't possible without a very well armed population, and I'm thankful every day for it.

Oh, and for those confused by the term militias...militias are groups of armed individuals. It's individuals' inherent rights that are recognized and guaranteed by all the amendments contained in the Bill of Rights, not groups, clubs, committees, but all individual Americans. Back to the Federalist Papers...sure, it was expected it would take the coordination of the armed populace in the form of militias to ever hope to resist the power of the government, but it is the individual who has the right to keep and bear arms that is provided for by our constitution.

Ben Pualwan

Charlotte, VT

[802-881-5054](tel:802-881-5054)

Subject: Please vote NO on S.55 and no new gun laws

To the Vermont Judiciary Committee

I plan to call the State house to leave you a message. However, I'm also emailing you to vote NO on bill (S.55) and all other proposed gun legislation. What started out as simple legislation around age and background checks has turned into a full assault on law abiding Vermont citizens. S.55 is now loaded up with all kinds of firearm bans and other restriction for no other reason than "Politics". FBI statistics show that Vermont is one of the safest states in the nation per capita with the highest amount of firearms per capita. We DO NOT NEED ANY NEW GUN LAWS. Instead, we need to be focusing on enforcement of the current laws we already have and to institute real security reform for all public schools. I have been to the statehouse multiple times now and each and every time we as pro-gun supporters outnumber those in favor of new gun legislation by significant margins. However, the legislature seemingly refuses to acknowledge that. Moreover, S.55 attempts to "criminalize" my household. We're a hard working, tax paying household that votes and consider S.55 an affront to our rights protected by the Vermont State Constitution. Please do NOT support S. 55 and NO NEW GUN LAWS!

If you would like to speak to me directly, I can be reached at (802) 578-7991.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Lawrence Hughes
45 Windridge Rd
Essex Junction, VT 05452

.....
Subject: No on S.55

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.

Christopher Parker

Subject: Please Oppose S.55

Rep. Maxine Grad,

I am writing to you to ask you to please oppose S.55 and any new gun laws.

You made a promise the veto any new gun bill when you were elected, please keep your promise. The only gun laws Vermont has a problem with are not enforcing the laws it already has. In the wake of the controversies with Broward County Sheriff Office, Sheriff Scott Isreal, Capt Jan Jordan, and other agencies it is unconscionable to take firearms away from law abiding citizens. Striping citizens of there right to own firearms until 21 is the same as not allowing them to protect themselves.

Hamilton Stockton IV

VP UVM Student Veterans Association

SGT VT ARNG

CPL USMC (Ret)

2010-2014

OEF, New Normal

Subject: No new gun laws!!

No way should new gun laws be passed! Vermont is one of the safest places in the world, don't disarm the good honest people.

Derrick Dupuis

Dear Chair of the House Judiciary,

I am writing you in concern of Bill S.55 and any other suggested new firearms laws. I truly hope that everyone is paying attention to the blatant disregard and violations of Constitutional right, both Federal and State, that are in these proposed regulations. I also hope that everyone takes into consideration that Representative Lalonde, who is behind S.55, speaking that he does not even know if he supports what he has introduced.

In the wake of recent events in this State and in this Country, we all want safety for our children. We all want safety for our fellow human beings. With that being said, we need to enforce the laws that currently stand. We need to explore security at schools. We need to fix our mental health system. We do not need to create new laws that infringe on our rights as law abiding citizens to own firearms.

I have heard law enforcement say many times that the proposed laws are impossible to enforce and this is very true. Secondly, how can you ban a semi-automatic firearm based upon its looks? Do we ban people based strictly on their looks? No, we try to accommodate everyone and their needs, who are legally here.

Please consider the outcry from the people who maintain your position in office. Legal firearms owners are a peaceful people who insist our RIGHTS not be violated.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Brigham Lunn
Tunbridge, Vermont

.....
Subject: S55

Hello Mrs. Grad, my name is Ian and I'm writing to let you know you should oppose S55 because this is an infringement on my second amendment right. I am 18 years old and I am a responsible gun owner. I've been hunting and shooting since I was 10 years old. It's a family tradition and a very important one. Most of the hand guns I own are semi-automatic and so is the shot gun I got for Christmas this year. I am in tech school at the moment for the VT Air National Guard and I cannot be around to oppose this in person until the end of March so I hope you hear this and take my thought into consideration. Thanks

Ian O'Brien

.....
Mrs. Grad,

Hello and thank you for taking the time to read this. My name is Colin Mandigo and I live in Hyde Park VT. I was born and raised in this great state and have always been proud to call it my home and let people know where I come from.

That being said, I have to tell you how absolutely blown away I am and disgusted that something like this bill could even be considered to make it past its opening sentence. I don't say that lightly either. I understand that people have become less and less concerned about the value of life and are far too quick now to take things to a level that should never be allowed. I understand that guns have come a long way and that certain people should not be allowed to possess a firearm. I understand that and I do not disagree with some aspects of what is being said.

As a lifelong gun owner I will say that I agree with background checks, there is no reason that people shouldn't have to pass one to procure a firearm. That being said, I also believe that Vermont has had a longstanding history of people being able to buy and sell to and from individuals that they deem responsible enough to do so with and see no

reason that that should have to change. No matter what you do, people will continue, you know this as well as I.

I also have no problem with waiting periods, as long as they are not absurdly and unnecessarily long. The reasons that I can think of where someone would NEED a firearm that same day are few and far between.

I can't say that I love the idea of changing the age of purchase to 21, but I also can't say that I don't understand why it is being considered. We have begun to raise generations of children that are so ill prepared to deal with the real world and the problems that arise within it that it is impossible to trust them at an age that always seemed reasonable in the past.

I also believe that some of the new things being proposed are a good idea and will be very beneficial in keeping people safe. If you are an individual that has been putting out enough warning signs for someone to bring it to the attention of the authorities that you may harm yourself or others, then absolutely it may be necessary for law enforcement to hold their weapons until they can be evaluated and it can be discovered whether the accusation is true or false. Along with that I don't think that ANYONE that has been found guilty, guilty being a key word, of domestic violence should be able to possess a firearm.

Having said all of that, I have to say that I cannot convey to you how disappointed I am that amendments to this bill including bans on certain parts of rifles and eventually, I'm sure, leading to an all out ban on "assault rifles" has made its way into legislation. It is unfortunate that what every one is looking for, "common sense" gun laws, can't be passed or agreed upon because someone has to weasel their way in at the last second and try to slap on amendments that they feel they can slip through, knowing full well that it is not what people want!

I am tired of seeing people move to this amazing state from places like New York, Washington DC and California, setting up shop in Burlington or Montpelier and then trying to change OUR way of life! It is unfair and unacceptable. The vast majority of the people that own these rifles are good, hard working, law abiding citizens that own them for their own reasons. Reasons that need not be explained to or scrutinized by government.

The arguments against the second amendment have been perpetuated by people who have little to no knowledge about what they so vilify. It wasn't only written for muskets, it isn't only cherished by "gun nuts" who are bigots, far rightists or doomsday fanatics. It is for everyone, so everyone can feel safe in their home or on the street or in their vehicle. Guns and the second amendment are not the issue here. No matter how many times people throw around the term "assault rifle" we will never be able to deny the one solid

fact, assault is a verb not a noun. Assault is an action not a certain set of things.

Thank you again for taking the time to read this and I hope that you will take my words and the words of the many others I know you are hearing from into consideration.

-Proud Vermont citizen and gun owner

- Colin S Mandigo

“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.”

- 2nd Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, December 15th, 1791

.....
Please stand to oppose S.55 and any new gun laws in Vermont.

I left NY recently and purchased a home in VT for many reasons. The assault on law-abiding gun owners must stop. The gun debate must stop. The debate must shift from guns to the psychiatric drug problem this country has.

Please stand down on gun control and address the real issues that we are faced with.

Jennifer Carmichael
Arlington, VT

.....
Good Morning,

Bill S.55 will do nothing to prevent the tragic events that have affected all of us. This bill has not been well thought out. It seems to focus on cosmetic characteristics that have nothing to do with the actual issue at hand. This bill will do nothing but hamstring law abiding sportsmen. Please make the hard choice and work on getting to the bottom of the real problem.

Respectfully,

Richard Craig
Morrisville

.....
Hi, my name is Marshall McAllister and I am a lifelong resident, tax payer and gun owner in the state of vt. I urge you to vote against the proposed bill S.55. Our state has some of the most lenient gun laws and as a result, we are ranked as one of the lowest states in homicides. The surveys that rank VT. as one of the highest, unfortunately includes self inflicted deaths, which is a more important issue that the state should be addressing.

A recent CBS study lists the top 20 states with the most gun violence, most of which have some of the toughest gun laws and regulations, these are the state's that should be revisiting their gun laws not ours.

Vt. should be an example based on its past history and continue to promote education and programs that teach proper gun safety and gun use.

I urge you to vote against this bill and work towards introducing legislation that will better benefit and protect the tax payers and residents in our state.

Thank you for your time.



I have included a symbolic caricature of that venerable drink, Kool-Aid, as it epitomizes what has happened to the Democrat legislators regarding S.55. You can quote statistics that your rabid anti-gun leadership has had you drink. They don't care about facts or common sense. If you truly care about Vermont and Vermonters you would sit back, gather your own facts from non biased sources (FBI) and ask yourself does this make sense to up root and tear apart a life style in this state to support a partisan platform dictated by the national Democratic leadership?

Let's remember these anti-gun bills usually originate in Chittenden county. Chittenden county is only 5.6% of Vermont's total geographic area. It is 25.5% of the population. So what is happening is 25.5% of the population feels it is their mission in life to "dictate" what the rest of the state, 94.4% of the land mass, should do and how they should do it. Talk about bullying! The rest of Vermont is that preverbal "fly over zone" that is not worth worrying about as the people there are just farmers, loggers, hunters, you know hard working people and the like. The important people live in Chittenden county, Rutland Barre, Montpelier. That is what Hillary thought in the 2016 elections about middle America. This will comeback sooner than later and the elite Democrats will pay a heavy price. Think carefully about what you do!

To see the arm twisting done by leadership to "force" your vote to a YEA is despicable. We elect legislators to use their intelligence, their life experiences to make calculated and independent decisions. That is not happening in Montpelier. The Dem's have become a group of people told how to vote issue by issue. Shameful!

This all started over issues on school safety. Instead of starting there and evaluating what the issues are, the leadership couldn't pass up an opportunity to go after guns. Now, I see in today's BFP, we now hear leadership saying we will be looking at school safety next. Huh?

How can you lower yourselves to be a part of this reprehensible display of political power? UBC's will be meaningless other than harassing law abiding gun owners. The magazine ban is a also unjustified legislation. The Parkland shooter used 10 round magazines. Remember by FBI statistics, less than 1% of crimes are committed with rifles or less than 300 times per year nationwide. Almost none involve AR style rifles. We average about 13,000 homicides annually.

S.55, other than bump-stocks, should be defeated as it is only feel good legislation that will not produce any measurable results.

Be honest with yourselves and your constituents. Your leadership doesn't care about you, they only care about themselves!

Bruce Lindner
Colchester, VT

Dear Ms. Grad,

As a Vermont business owner, father, and concerned citizen, I'd like to voice my opposition to any further restrictions on gun purchases and ownership, as it will infringe upon my rights, as well as the rights of all responsible gun owners in the state of Vermont. According to statistics, there are 30,000 gun related deaths per year in the US. 65% is suicide, 15% is by law enforcement in the line of duty, 17% are through criminal activity, gang, drug related, or mentally ill persons (5,100/30,000 deaths per year), and 3% is accidental discharge. This means that only 5,100 deaths in the US is considered gun violence. The majority of the 5,100 deaths happen in larger cities such as Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit and Washington DC. All four of those major cities have strictly enforced gun laws. What good is that doing? Therefore, the majority of gun related violence occurs in areas with much higher criminal activity. Between the start of 2011, and the end of 2016, 420 people died from gunshot wounds in Vermont. Out of the 420 people, 89%, or 373 deaths was due to suicide. The remaining 11% contains all other categories of gun related death. This would include not only gun violence, but law enforcement related, and accidental discharge. Vermont has a record of very low gun crime, and I feel that any more restrictions is as futile attempt to promote "safety" at the expense of many responsible Vermont citizens.

Sincerely,
David Appleton

Hello,

I am writing to humbly ask (assuming it's appropriate and something you can vote on - still making my way around this civic stuff) that you vote "NO" to bill S. 55. The amendments are not constitutional and will set a precedent for the rest of the nation (assuming they haven't already enacted their own similar laws). In 1971 Congress passed the 26th Amendment to the Constitution to allow the voting age to be reduced to 18 and a big part of the argument was because our military men and women should not be sent to war without the right of proper representation. Now it's being proposed to raise the legal gun

ownership age to 21, when still our military men/women enlist and defend our country as early as 18. How can they go to war, or even into peace situations where they are there to keep the peace, equipped with military grade weaponry, and they can't even own a hunting rifle legally at home until the age of 21? I strongly believe this to be unconstitutional. I also feel it's an "easy" answer to a very complex and nuanced problem. A problem that will infringe on legal adults rights to be gun owners. How is okay for men and women to fight and die for their country but not for them to legally own a firearm at home? This is wrong and I believe strongly that if you, as individuals, honestly reflect on this you will agree with me.

There are a number of other matters within bill S. 55 that are patently wrong or far too open ended to be considered right. By open ended I simply mean they allow for interpretation. Can you imagine the unintended consequences if the United States Constitution or Bill of Rights allowed for "interpretation" because things were vague? It is our responsibilities to ourselves and our children/grandchildren to be concise and not allow for far reaching unintended consequences of our vague or lazy language to affect our children and our children's children negatively.

There is also the consideration as to why these alterations are being proposed and potentially made to Vermont's gun laws. I ask you honestly, why? Do we have gun violence here in the state that warrants these regulations? Do we, as a state, have numerous recorded incidences with semi-automatic weapons that have certain "cosmetic characteristics?" Are people using detachable magazines that hold more than 10 rounds for nefarious purposes? Are gun owners in Vermont proving themselves so irresponsible that the NICS background check isn't sufficient? Or is this purely political, and the law abiding citizens of the state you preside over as representatives, the citizens who elected you and believe in you, are to be punished so that Vermont can set a precedent nationwide as being progressive and forward thinking? I challenge you, if it is the latter, prove to the people that elected you that you still believe in your civic duty and you will uphold the voices of those who believe in theirs (for better or worse). Please do not be wavered by doing what you think will keep us safe, allow us to decide that.

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Wysteria Jackson

Orleans County, VT

.....

As a citizen of this state, I was shocked to see what Rep. LaLonde has proposed in violation of my 2a and Art16 rights. It seems I have spent much of my free time reminding this legislature that infringements go against your oath of office and duties as a representative.

S.221 was already butchered in your House committee to strip Constitutional protections from it. Very sad to have to fight that as well since the Senate version was at least a compromise.

It is disappointing to see the body currently in the People's House running freely to destroy our rights. I doubt I'll get any response as is common these days. That's fine but it is important you know the majority here are against the trampling of our rights. Perhaps it is time I simply look to remove my income and taxes to another state and let you all figure out how to replace it.

Rob Ashton

Underhill, Vt

Dear Ms. Grad and Ms. Johnson:

I am writing today in opposition to S. 55 -- a monstrosity designed to gut Vermont's long-standing 1st in the nation tradition of gun rights. Vermont is not, nor should ever be, New York, or Massachusetts.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to reject this reactionary and misguided legislation. NOTHING we have experienced here warrants this kind of sweeping hysteria.

Most sincerely,

Alex Knight
Marlboro
464-0701

My name is Kasey Copeland. I am an East Barre resident of Vermont. I do not support bill S.55.
-Kasey Copeland

I, absolutely, as against S-55. It is an emotional reaction that will do nothing but harm honest gun owners. This type of jerk knee e reaction will not improve additives safety. Please do not allow this to go through!!

Thankfully,

Bob Pearo Jr

From: Thomas Vigeant [mailto:tvigeant2@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 12:09 PM
To: Mike Bailey
Subject: S.55

This bill is going to do nothing for school shootings in Vermont. I do not want this bill passed

These new Vermonters are killing the old Vermont that generations of my family have known and loved. Stop the carnage, no more nails in the coffin, say no to any new attempts at infringing on the

constitutional right to keep and bear arms. These are not "common sense" school safety solutions, they are very thinly veiled attempts at circumventing constitutional rights no more, no less

Most sincerely,

Patrick Finnie

Mr. LaLonde,

We are not New York nor do we ever want or need to be.

Please read the Vermont history of Ethan Allen and his fight to be free from New Your and their ways.

If you want to live in New Your I suggest you go there. Do not bring New York here.

Our firearms laws suit Vermont just fine.

Sincerely,

Kerry Burke

I am writing to respectfully log my strong opposition to Rep LaLonde's amendment to Senate Bill S.55. This amendment will accomplish nothing to increase the safety of Vermont's residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Alfano

255 Spruce Lane

Dorset, VT 05251

From: Dan Rapphahn [mailto:danrapphahnv@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 9:14 AM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: S.55

I strongly say no to S.55

We are one of the safest states in the union Please do not mess with our gun laws Make the schools safer!!!

From: Jim Dattilio [mailto:sparkyrumble@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 5:13 AM

To: Mike Bailey

Subject: No to s-55

This is jim Dattilio .Its not our fault we have done nothing wrong . Our second amendment shall not be infringed. This is the us constitution that you as an American citizen must uphold and protect . This is the law of the land . What gives these legislators the right to tear down or amend the us constitution?

No to S.55 !

Steve L'Heureux, Pres.
The Mac Doctor, Inc.
5 Mountain St., Apt 3W
Bristol, VT 05443

From: Karol Buchanan [mailto:karol.buchanan@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2018 4:38 PM
To: Mike Bailey
Subject: No to S 55

I would like to express my concerns about S55 . Please do not pass this bill . We do not need a bill like this in our state . Thank you in advance . A concerned Vermonter .

From: Robert C. Potter <Robert.C.Potter@dartmouth.edu>

Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2018 11:33 AM

To: Maxine Grad

Subject: S 55

Please do not pass S 55. You had a good bill and now it is so bollixed its terrible!

Thank You

Good morning.

Please vote no on S55. It is against the law and an all gun grab and ban. Vermonters don't want this. Stand with Vermonters not NY bloomberg money.

NO on S55

Thank you for your time.

Matt marchessault

1992 Kellogg rd

St. Albans town

Morning to you all,

Again I am calling (have left message with Sgt. at Arms) and emailing you an others to request you shut down and eliminate this bill (S.55) and all other proposed gun legislation. FBI statistics show that Vermont is one of the safest states in the nation per capita with the highest amount of firearms per capita. We DO NOT NEED ANY NEW GUN LAWS. Instead, how about focusing on enforcement of the current laws we already have? I have been to the statehouse multiple times now and each and every time we as pro-gun supporters outnumber those in favor of new gun legislation by huge margins, yet you seemingly refuse to acknowledge that. I was at UVM last week where we might have had a discussion, yet none of you were there. VERY DISAPPOINTED! Do any of you pick up the papers, watch the news (even the liberal news) to see the repeat criminals causing violence? Come on!

NO TO S. 55 and NO NEW GUN LAWS!

If any of you would like to talk, I can be reached at home (802) 889-5694, on my Cell (802)377-7566 or even stop by. Mr. MacDonald has been to my home before when he was searching for votes so he knows where I live in Tunbridge.

Thank you and have a good day.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Caron

.....

Dear Representative Grad,

My name is Michael Bruce and I am a social studies teacher at Fair Haven Union High School. I am also a lifelong Vermonter, resident of Orwell, father of two, and a lifelong lawful gun owner and shooting sports enthusiast. As you know, our community recently thwarted a planned attempt by a former student to perpetrate a school shooting at FHUHS. The laws and procedures that were already in place worked! I am dismayed to see the ways in which the governor and others are reacting to this attempt and the recent school shooting in Parkland, Florida. It is a knee-jerk reaction at best and constitutes a threat to our Constitutional right to self defense. My family has been in Vermont since before it entered the Union as the 14th state. As you know, Vermont has a long and proud tradition of gun ownership and self reliance. Chapter 1, Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution can trace its wording back to the original Constitution of the Vermont Republic drafted in July of 1777. Therefore, it predates the U.S. Bill of Rights and its 2nd Amendment. Both are clear in stating the importance of a citizen's right to keep and bear arms. I urge you to stand fast in the coming weeks in support of the rights of lawful gun owners, which the majority of your constituents -- the very people who put you in office count themselves amongst.

I am asking you to vote NO on any new gun legislation proposed. In regards to violent crime, we are the safest state in the nation exactly the way we are. The events in Parkland were not caused by a lack of gun legislation. In fact, as more details emerge, it is apparent that there was an epic collapse in regards to enforcing the existing measures that were already in place.

There is now a frantic rush to pass bills while the nation mourns the loss of these students — while the emotional wounds are still fresh and reason is not the guiding principle. At a recent press conference, Attorney General Donovan, Speaker Johnson, Senate Pro Tempore Ashe and Lt Governor Zuckerman all announced that S.221, H.422 and even S.6 would be voted on by the Senate as early as next week. Other bills that aren't even active are also being openly discussed, such as an Assault Weapons Ban and a High Capacity Magazine Ban. There will be attempts to add these measures and more as amendments to these bills. I just learned today that they have amended S.55 to include a ban on so called "assault weapons" and "high capacity" magazines. Please resist these efforts and do not support these bills!

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter,
Michael W. Bruce

.....

Ms Grad,

I understand the importance of gun safety in our state, but why are we penalizing the responsible gun owners of Vermont? Our state is one of the safest in the country I believe due to the availability and legal use of firearms. I'm originally from Long island and I can assure you I feel safer in our state as opposed to the state of New York with some of the strictest gun laws in the country.

I know that law abiding citizens have firearms on their person or in their home willing to help anyone at any time.

Thanks for listening,

Michael Dente

.....
I am writing to say no to any new gun control laws. I read the proposed amendments to S.55 today by lalonde of Burlington. They are the most disgusting assault on our Constitution I have ever witnessed in this state. And they will do nothing to make this state safer. I suggest the legislature find a way to keep that man in Fair Haven locked up long term as the criminal charges against him are likely to fail instead of assaulting our freedom. Remember, that guy passed a background check at a dealer and he bought a normal hunting shotgun. Under the Heller decision bearable arms in common use are protected under the Second Amendment. The most popular guns in America would be restricted by these proposals.

I further ask that, pursuant to the VT Constitution's provision that any violation of the oath of office be punished as perjury, that lalonde of Burlington be so charged, impeached, and removed from office.

Casey Jennings
Rutland

.....
Representative Grad,

I an writing to let you know I oppose S.55. I am asking that you vote NO on S.55.

Thank You,

James A Baril

.....
Hello esteemed Representatives,

IT is with great distress I am contacting you about the current Gun Control Bills that are currently making their way around the Senate and House. The current crops of bills and amendments are an affront to all law abiding hunters, sportsmen and women and all involved in the shooting sports in VT. While all of them are a direct attack on our Constitutional rights as enumerated in Article 16 of the State Constitution and the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution, S55, as it

is currently written, and the amendments that have been added last minute in a way that bypasses any input from my and the rest of the States voters is absolutely abhorrent to anyone who values our rights as legal and responsible owners of firearms in this State. YOUR responsibility and Oath as you took when you were voted into office has you working for the PEOPLE of this State, not for outside groups and influences like GunSense VT or any number of other organizations that are currently trying to change our very way of life! I know from the recent meetings in Montpelier, those of us opposed to new legislation heavily outnumber those wishing to change our laws(many of which are getting their direction and funding as well as support from out of State organizations) to mirror the draconian laws in other States that are still being fought in the courts as being unconstitutional. I am asking you today to support your Constituents and Citizens and vote down any and all laws that will do nothing but hurt legal owners of firearms and will do nothing to combat the small amount of crime we in Vermont see from individuals with them. If you need to make changes, strengthen the laws on the books already and put the penalties on those who COMMIT the crimes not those who are simply exercising their rights, Increase funding for drug and mental health programs in the State and Make it possible for educators and volunteers to become able to protect our children in the schools by allowing those who wish to to be able to carry firearms to protect their students.

Respectfully,

Brian Sterling

Franklin County resident and voter

.....
Rep. Willhoit,

It was nice to see you at the Sportsman Caucus Reception last evening. Please find attached research that I have done concerning the part of S.55 that prohibits all firearm sales to persons under 21 years of age. Please share with your fellow committee members. I have more analysis on other aspects of the bill that I would like to send you tonight or tomorrow.

Thanks

Again

Ben Broe

I am Ben Broe a resident of Burlington VT. Here is my analysis of Sec.7.13V.S.A.§4020 as amended to bill S.55 which prohibits the sale of a firearm to a person under 21 years of age. I want to express that I am a Vermont citizen who is concerned about the erosion of constitutional rights. **I ask for a NO vote on S.55**

I have extensively researched Sec.7.13V.S.A.§4020 and believe it to be facially unconstitutional under Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution. Sec.7.13V.S.A.§4020 prohibits the sale of ALL firearms of common use to those adult, law abiding citizens under the age of 21. This imposes a significant, unequal and impermissible burden on the right to bear arms for the defense of one's self as guaranteed by Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution for an ENTIRE class of adult (those who have reached the age of majority), law abiding citizens. The significant, unequal, and impermissible burden being the inability to purchase a firearm in effect is such an infringement on the ability to bear arms that the statute would be unconstitutional.

SUPPORTING DATA:

We find in Vermont Supreme Court case 154 A. 695 (Vt. 1931), Luella Rafus v. D. K. Daley that the age of majority is set by the Legislature within the constitutional limit of 21.

- 1) [The constitution is not a grant of power to the Legislature, but it is a limitation of its general powers.](#) *Thorpe v Rutland B.R. Co.*, 27 Vt. 140, 62 A.D. 625. The Legislature's power is practically absolute, except for constitutional limitations. *City of Burlington v. Central Vermont Railway Co.*, 82 Vt. 5, 9, 71 A. 826; *Town of Bennington v. Park*, 50 Vt. 178, 191; *Thorpe v. Rutland B.R. Co.*, *supra*. Subject to constitutional restraints, the state legislatures have been compared to the British Parliament whose, "power and jurisdiction," according to Lord Coke, "is transcendent and absolute." *Thorpe v. Rutland B.R. Co.*, 27 Vt. 140, 142, 143, 62 A.D. 625.
- 2) These fundamental and oft-quoted principles of law are applicable and controlling here, and we hold that the Legislature has the power to fix the period of majority at any age

within the constitutional limitation of twenty-one years. The constitutional amendment and the statute here being considered are not in conflict, and so the latter was not repealed by the former. The constitutional provision prohibits action by the Legislature beyond the limitation imposed, but the statute is within that limitation and is not affected thereby.

We find in Vermont Statute 1 V.S.A. § 173 that the legislature has set the age of majority at the age of 18

§ 173. Minors

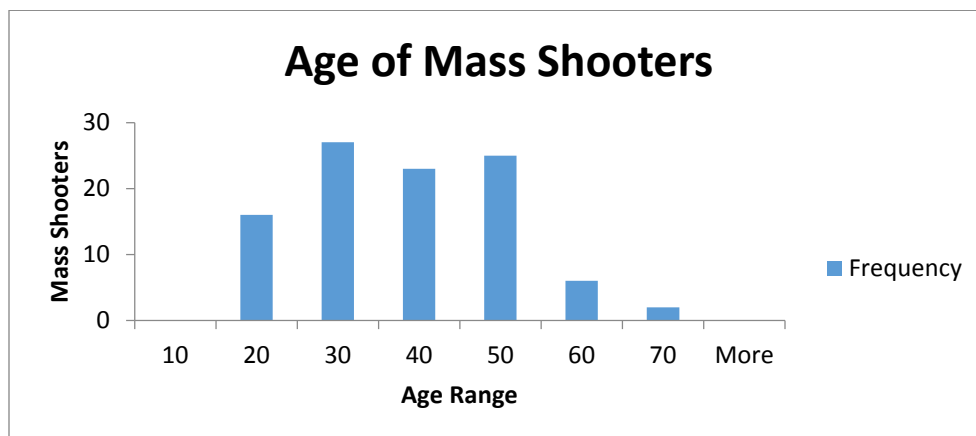
Persons of the age of 18 years shall be considered of age and until they attain that age, shall be minors. Whenever referred to in the laws of this State, a person who is an adult or who has attained majority shall be a resident or nonresident person of 18 years of age or more. (Amended 1971, No. 90, § 1; 1971, No. 184 (Adj. Sess.), § 1, eff. March 29, 1972.)

We find from U.S. Supreme Court case 428 U.S. 52 (1976) that Constitutional rights do not mature and come into being magically only when one attains the state-defined age of majority. Minors, as well as adults, are protected by the Constitution and possess constitutional rights. See, e. g., *Breed v. Jones*, 421 U.S. 519 (1975); *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975); *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969); *In re Gault*, 387 U.S. 1 (1967).

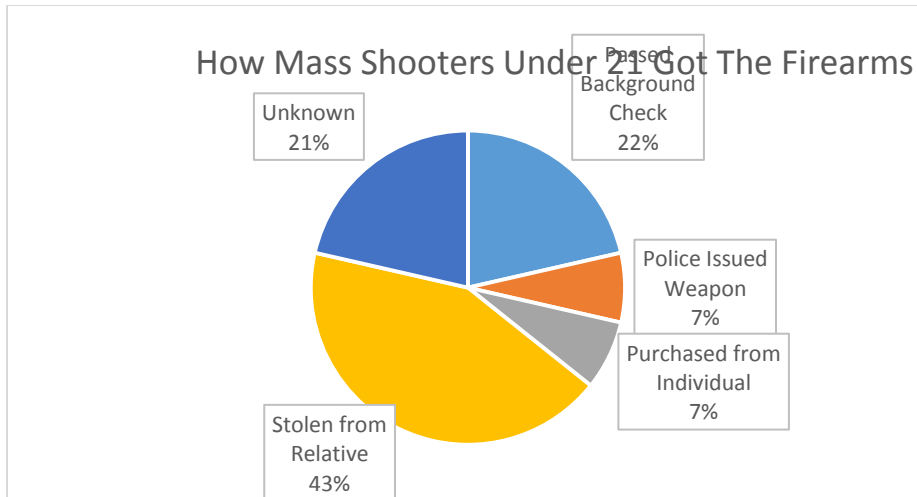
Thus meaning that minors and adults have constitutional rights, with the state defined age of majority being the maximum age that a person obtains full legal rights and responsibilities.

Facts about age groups of those responsible for mass shootings (defined as 3 or more casualties, data from Mother Jones web site since 1987)

Average age of mass shooters is **34 years old**. If you look at the breakout of age groups you are targeting a group of citizens who commit less mass shootings than those in their 30's, 40's, or 50's.



When we look at the under 21 year old population this is how they obtained the firearms. You can see that 43% obtained the firearms by stealing from a relative. Prohibiting the sale of a firearm to this age group will not prevent the majority of occurrences and violates the constitutional rights of a substantial group of law abiding citizens.



Please vote NO on S55, and or any amendments or House versions of this over-reaching bill.

Vt is one of, if not the safest states in the nation and we don't need new gun legislation.

Listen to your constituents, and not a bunch of emotional children being stirred up by their teachers!

It's Not about hunting, It's about defense of self and state/nation.

I took the vow in 1961, and several times since, when I re-enlisted, to "protect and defend the constitution of the United States (and Vermont) against all enemies, foreign and domestic". You have taken that same vow. There is no expiration date.

I am a good, law-abiding citizen and a patriot. I expect no less of each of you.

Thank You,
 Bruce Bailey, Richmond, Vt
 999-3565

After every shooting there is an outcry to disarm those citizens who had nothing to do with it! Guns are not the issue.

2016 is the latest year for which FBI statistics are available for crime in the U.S. Murders are tabulated by type of weapon used nationally in 2016 as follows:

Rifles	374
Knives or cutting instruments	1604
Hands, fists, feet	656

This clearly shows that rifles are not the problem, knives and cutting instruments are the real issue. We need to rid knives, and perhaps hands, fists and feet, from all households in Vermont

Those focusing on further firearm bans or magazine restrictions are clearly focusing on the wrong issue and asking the wrong questions. The above makes as much sense. Over prescription of SSRIs is the root cause.

George J. Schaefer
PO Box 631
Warren, VT 05674

Dear Committee Members,

I am not only a law-abiding Vermont gun owner, and your constituent, I am also a faculty member in the Vermont State College System. I hold a Master in Educational Technology and will hold this fall a Masters in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. 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, behavioral and education problems that desperately need to be addressed.

If you truly want to fix the issue of violence in our society you need to look at more than the firearms. This society has removed firearms education out of schools, provided as many first person shooter video games as possible (which are protected under the 1st Amendment) and do not see a connection? We use video simulations for our military to train and retrain each time making it easier to pull the trigger or drop the bomb for real. However, none of you see the connection? States with Gun Laws far stricter than Vermont are having significantly greater issues with crime, shootings and illegal gun trade and you think that passing these laws here will do what for one of the safest States in the Union?

Please stand strong in support of the Second Amendment and oppose all gun control schemes or you will not have my vote or the vote of my family who have dedicated their lives and time to becoming Certified Firearms Safety Instructors to prevent the very thing you are. We however understand the problem must be educated out of society. Laws against drugs did not stop the youth, "say no to drug" campaigns and addiction education did. Laws against drunk driving did slow the tide of teen drunk driving deaths, "MADD and SADD" and drunk driving education did. Please do not think that passing yet another gun law will end the violence, Eddie Eagle and firearm safety education will and we will be there to do it when you were not!

Please support and focus on legislation to protect our schools and our school communities, as well as fix our broken mental health reporting system and put firearms education back in school. **Educate not confiscate!**

Kay McIsaac

NRA Certified Instructor

Home Firearm Safety

Certified Pistol

Certified Rifle

Personal Protection In The Home

Dear Representative Grad,

My name is Michael Bruce and I am a social studies teacher at Fair Haven Union High School. I am also a lifelong Vermonter, resident of Orwell, father of two, and a lifelong lawful gun owner and shooting sports enthusiast. As you know, our community recently thwarted a planned attempt by a former student to perpetrate a school shooting at FHUHS. The laws and procedures that were already in place worked! I am dismayed to see the ways in which the governor and others are reacting to this attempt

and the recent school shooting in Parkland, Florida. It is a knee-jerk reaction at best and constitutes a threat to our Constitutional right to self defense. My family has been in Vermont since before it entered the Union as the 14th state. As you know, Vermont has a long and proud tradition of gun ownership and self reliance. Chapter 1, Article 16 of the Vermont Constitution can trace its wording back to the original Constitution of the Vermont Republic drafted in July of 1777. Therefore, it predates the U.S. Bill of Rights and its 2nd Amendment. Both are clear in stating the importance of a citizen's right to keep and bear arms. I urge you to stand fast in the coming weeks in support of the rights of lawful gun owners, which the majority of your constituents -- the very people who put you in office count themselves amongst.

I am asking you to vote NO on any new gun legislation proposed. In regards to violent crime, we are the safest state in the nation exactly the way we are. The events in Parkland were not caused by a lack of gun legislation. In fact, as more details emerge, it is apparent that there was an epic collapse in regards to enforcing the existing measures that were already in place.

There is now a frantic rush to pass bills while the nation mourns the loss of these students — while the emotional wounds are still fresh and reason is not the guiding principle. At a recent press conference, Attorney General Donovan, Speaker Johnson, Senate Pro Tempore Ashe and Lt Governor Zuckerman all announced that S.221, H.422 and even S.6 would be voted on by the Senate as early as next week. Other bills that aren't even active are also being openly discussed, such as an Assault Weapons Ban and a High Capacity Magazine Ban. There will be attempts to add these measures and more as amendments to these bills. I just learned today that they have amended S.55 to include a ban on so called "assault weapons" and "high capacity" magazines. Please resist these efforts and do not support these bills!

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter,

Michael W. Bruce

.....

I just wanted to let you know that I'm not in favor of the bill S55 in terms of the ban on certain style rifles and high capacity magazines. I believe this law is an infringement on our constitutional rights as American citizens and as vermonters. I believe that these laws only affect the law-abiding citizen. They do nothing to stop somebody who is bent on destruction. I hope you take my opinion as a vermonter into consideration as you look at this new potential law. I think we should be focusing more on how we can turn our schools into hard targets so there are more deterrents if somebody were to go to a school to do harm and I think our focus should be on those measures and not on disarming law-abiding citizens.

Thank you for your time,

Matt Boardman

.....

NO to any semi-automatic rifle ban; NO to any ban on large capacity magazines; and NO to any waiting period after the NICS check!

I am a law-abiding, tax-paying, voting citizen of the state of Vermont and don't want or need any new limitations on my right to bear arms! Any questions - see Article 16 of the Vermont constitution. I once

had to wait three hours for the VSP to respond to a problem with a threatening neighbor. The old expression that "When every second counts the police are only minutes away" doesn't even come close to the reality.

Raymond Saloomey, Bakersfield, VT

Respected members of the Vermont Legislature,

I ask you please take a moment to read the attached document on the Chittenden County Fraternal Order of Police's stance on gun control.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Very respectfully,

Padric Hartnett
President
Chittenden County Fraternal Order of Police

CHITTENDEN COUNTY FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

To the members of the Vermont Legislature,
I currently serve as the President of the Chittenden County Fraternal Order of Police. We are an organization of roughly two hundred law enforcement officers serving in state, county and municipal agencies. Although we are the Chittenden County Fraternal Order of Police, we are open to all law enforcement in the state. I would first and foremost like to state, our organizations sympathies go out to all those affected by the tragedy of the Parkland School shooting, as well as all of the other tragedies that have plagued us in recent times. This event was one of many senseless acts of violence conducted recently in the United States. As with many tragedies, a society looks for answers, and also somewhere to place the blame. In this case, the heated debates about gun regulation.

After asking the opinions of the lodges membership, we have come to the collective agreement that as citizens and members of the Law enforcement community, we strongly oppose the rash of new gun control legislation trying to be pushed rapidly through this session. Many view this as a quick knee jerk reaction, that is more based on feelings then trying to address other issues such as mental health, drugs and the proper enforcement of the laws already on the books. As fellow Vermonters I assume you realize our state is synonymous with thousands of proud and educated firearms owners, who have respected, and will continue to respect what a firearm is, and what its proper uses are for.

As law enforcement, we acknowledge and whole heartily accept the responsibility of keeping the citizens of Vermont safe, and we are the gatekeepers of the criminal justice system. Our duty is to protect and serve, and we will continue to do this. Part of our service is ensuring those we serve have their constitutional rights protected and un-infringed upon. We believe the bills will infringe upon Vermonters constitutional writes as citizens of this state, and this

country. This could place us in a position of contention with law-abiding citizens for no good reason. We respectfully ask these laws not be pushed forward, and to have a more realistic, and all encompassing look into the larger issues, rather than use firearm laws as a quick fix.

Very Respectfully,

Padric Hartnett - President

Chittenden County Fraternal Order of Police

I agree we need to do something on these tragedies. Being a gun owner and a long life resident of VT 66 Yrs and having my wife & daughter both in the teaching professions, I have concerns with school shootings, but I am also glad I live in VT with our gun laws !!

I hope we can all agree that the "Elephant In The Room" is Mental Illness and not a Gun Issue, even though gun was used in these crimes only because it was easy pickings (Gun Free Zones) only those with some sort of a mental deficiency or criminal intent are your problem !! We have "millions" of firearms in the US and they never caused a problem, we all know why " Law Abiding Citizens " Mental Illness or Criminals (domestic violence) will never follow the laws and that includes the bills being proposed !!.

In Burlington we had a shooting a few weeks ago, yes a gun was used (again) the perpetrator was already a felon, that had a gun another felony offense (10) years sentence on the law books already. It's just like handing out a court order for protection in a domestic violence case, as we know those seldom work and again in Burlington two cases, one perpetrator used a base ball bat and the other used a meat cleaver.

The bills being pushed would not have stopped either of these crimes. I assume they are both crazy and I know they are both criminals, laws mean nothing to people like this , just evil .

As we know that perpetrator in Parkland was a complete mental case by all that knew him, including the local and state police along with the FBI, yes he should of never had a firearm, you cannot stop one from lieing on a form that is already a (Felony) that has intent to buy a gun for a evil purpose !! Again they all knew him (shameful).

So here's my two cent on fixing these sort of problems: First of all, we need to sucure all our schools by any means and that includes (armed) trained personel. Secondly we need to have our NICS data base and any Mental issue data in the same system. This a slippery slope but it can be done !!

The feel good GUN Bills being pushed by an Agenda in the last few weeks, will never stop Crazy or Criminals but they will cause Law Abiding Citizens to take a stand . Please Stop the nonsense and fix the problem , The elephant in the room.

Thanks for Listening
Charles Thompson
Burlington

Attached is my Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee regarding S.55.

S.55: Correction to Testimony by Auburn Watersong; RE:& Highlights of cited Annals of Int Med Article. Jeffrey Kaufman MD

It is directed towards correcting March 15, 2018 testimony by Auburn Watersong, and provides highlights to the Annals of Internal Medicine article she cited, but mis-characterized, as it relates to S.55.

I am unable to be at the Statehouse.

Please share this with the House Judiciary Committee chair and members.

Thank you very much.

S.55: Correction to Testimony by Auburn Watersong; RE: & Highlights of cited Annals of Int Med article. Jeffrey Kaufman MD

The following entry appears on the VT House Judiciary Committee's Documents & Bills website page for Thursday, March 15, 2018

- [S.55: Article on 2017 recent research on gun surrender laws published in Annals of Int Med](https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/document/2018/18/Bill/4184284#documents-section) Auburn Watersong

(<https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/document/2018/18/Bill/4184284#documents-section>)

*Auburn Watersong's testimonial title is **MISLEADING and INACCURATE***

1. Clicking the testimonial link, I found the article referred to is NOT from the Annals of Internal Medicine ("Annals"). The link opens a different article, an opinion piece written by an anti-gun news organization, The Trace. As a physician, I was interested in and prepared to read the cited article in the Annals. Finding an anti-gun opinion piece instead, I decided to study both the substituted article and the real "Annals" article. What I found was disturbing, explained below and in **Highlights from the actual "Annals" article**, on the following pages.

2. Link to the actual referenced “Annals” article:
<http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2654047/state-intimate-partner-violence-related-firearm-laws-intimate-partner-homicide>
3. The testimonial title “2017 recent research on gun surrender laws published in the *Annals of Int Med*”, actually covers data from 1991-2015. The “Annals” article might be considered recent, published in 2017, but not the data.
4. The “Annals” article’s focus was broader than “gun surrender laws”. They looked at Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)-related firearm POSSESSION laws, IPV rates, Intimate Partner Homicide (IPH) rates and whether or not IPV-related firearm surrender AND Possession laws influenced IPH rates across the US over 25 years. Further, IPH data also included cases bearing NO RELATION to FIREARMS! The actual study’s title did not mention firearm surrender laws for a reason!
5. The article associated with the testimonial link, was not an “Annals” article nor was it written by the authors of the “Annals” study. It made references not contained in the “Annals” article, made assertions at variance with the data published in the “Annals” article, and relied on another non-peer review, anti-gun biased source, as well as other articles published in The Trace.

Highlights from the actual “Annals” article

Of their study, “State Intimate Partner Violence–Related Firearm Laws and Intimate Partner Homicide Rates in the United States, 1991 to 2015”, the authors wrote: “We conducted a panel study to examine the association between state IPV-related firearm laws and total and firearm-related IPH rates between 1991 and 2015”. Their panel study was not constructed as double blind, placebo controlled clinical human research with carefully controlled variables. In fact, the study suffered from self-admitted limitations on causality interpretations.

STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE ISSUES

One association they did report was that Intimate Partner Violence-related firearm laws resulted in statistically significant ($P < 0.05$) reduced Intimate Partner Homicide (IPH) rates, in 1 of 6 cases. See Table 1, below

Table 1. Differences in IPH Rates Associated With 4 Categories of IPV-Related Firearm Laws Considered Individually*

Category	Total IPH		Firearm-Related IPH	
	Difference in Rate (95% CI), %	P Value	Difference in Rate (95% CI), %	P Value
Prohibition of firearm possession by persons convicted of an IPV-related misdemeanor	-2.9 (-13.3 to 8.7)	0.61	-6.6 (-13.9 to 1.5)	0.107
Relinquishment of firearms not required	-3.9 (-10.4 to 3.2)	0.28	-7.3 (-15.7 to 2.0)	0.118
Prohibition of firearm possession by persons subject to an IPV-related restraining order				
Relinquishment of firearms not required	-6.6 (-13.2 to 0.5)	0.068	-6.4 (-15.0 to 3.0)	0.176
Relinquishment of firearms required	-10.8 (-16.8 to -4.4)†	0.001	-15.0 (-23.3 to -5.9)†	0.002
Removal of firearms from the scene of an IPV incident	-1.9 (-8.2 to 4.9)	0.58	-1.1 (-9.2 to 7.9)	0.81
Prohibition of firearm possession by persons convicted of stalking	-2.6 (-7.5 to 2.5)	0.31	-4.0 (-10.9 to 3.5)	0.29

IPH = intimate partner homicide; IPV = intimate partner violence.

* Negative binomial regression models included year fixed effects and controlled for region, lagged IPH rate, stranger homicide rate, household gun ownership, proportion of the population that is African American, violent crime rate, and divorce rate. The reference group was states with no law in the given category.

† Statistically significant ($P < 0.05$).

Only prohibition of firearm possession by persons subject to an IPV-related restraining order, who were also subject to laws requiring relinquishment of firearms, was found to reduce Firearm-Related IPH significantly.

Laws across the 50 states from 1991-2015 prohibiting firearm possession by persons convicted of an IPV-related misdemeanor, whether in states requiring relinquishment of firearms or not, were not associated with statistically significant reductions in Intimate Partner Homicide (IPH) rates. Nor did laws requiring removal of firearms at the scene of an IPV incident significantly reduce IPH rates. Nor did laws prohibiting firearm possession by persons convicted of stalking significantly reduce IPH rates.

Based on these results, efforts by Vermont legislators to enact laws confiscating firearms of persons who have not been issued an IPV-related restraining order (by a court) would not be expected to reduce IPH rates. Nor would attempts to pass confiscatory firearm laws in Vermont for domestic violence incidents, wherein the State has not met the burden for a court to order such a restraining order, be expected to reduce IPH rates.

ONE

One IPH death in 2015 in Vermont

Vermont had the LOWEST number of Total IPH deaths in the US for 2015!

Appendix Table 2. Firearm-Related and Total IPH Rates in 2015 and Total Number of IPV-Related Firearm Law Provisions in 2014

State*	Firearm-Related IPH Rate in 2015 (per 100 000 persons)	Total IPH Rate in 2015 (per 100 000 persons)	Ratio of Firearm-Related to Total IPH Rate, %	Total IPV-Related Firearm Law Provisions in 2015, n†	Total IPH Deaths in 2015, n‡	Population in 2015, n
Alaska	0.96	1.60	60.3	0	12	738 432
South Carolina	0.87	1.33	65.7	0	65	4 896 146
Arkansas	0.84	1.30	64.5	0	39	2 978 204
Mississippi	0.81	0.97	83.2	0	29	2 992 333
Nevada	0.79	1.15	68.5	2	33	2 890 845
Georgia	0.75	0.91	82.9	0	93	10 214 860
Missouri	0.75	1.01	74.1	0	62	6 083 672
Louisiana	0.73	1.16	63.2	2	54	4 670 724
Tennessee	0.72	1.13	63.6	5	75	6 600 299
Montana	0.68	1.52	44.5	1	16	1 032 949
Virginia	0.56	0.82	68.8	0	69	8 382 993
Kentucky	0.54	0.79	68.2	0	35	4 425 092
Texas	0.50	0.79	63.0	2	218	27 469 114
North Carolina	0.49	0.81	61.0	2	81	10 042 802
Oklahoma	0.45	0.78	57.4	1	31	3 911 338
Michigan	0.44	0.82	53.8	0	82	9 922 576
Maryland	0.44	0.71	62.1	4	42	6 006 401
Arizona	0.40	0.74	54.2	2	50	6 828 065
Idaho	0.40	0.46	86.1	0	8	1 654 930
Kansas	0.40	0.66	60.4	0	19	2 911 641
Indiana	0.39	0.54	73.0	2	36	6 619 680
Pennsylvania	0.38	0.70	54.9	4	89	12 802 503
Wyoming	0.36	0.40	90.6	0	2	586 107
Washington	0.36	0.59	61.0	3	42	7 170 351
North Dakota	0.36	0.55	64.8	0	4	756 927
New Mexico	0.35	0.68	51.7	0	14	2 085 109
Ohio	0.34	0.54	61.7	1	63	11 613 423
Connecticut	0.31	0.47	66.7	5	17	3 590 886
Minnesota	0.28	0.59	47.5	5	32	5 489 594
Nebraska	0.28	0.34	81.3	2	6	1 896 190
Wisconsin	0.28	0.47	58.5	3	27	5 771 337
Colorado	0.27	0.53	50.7	5	29	5 456 574
California	0.26	0.48	54.9	6	188	39 144 818
Utah	0.26	0.30	86.7	1	9	2 995 919
Iowa	0.25	0.42	60.0	4	13	3 123 899
Illinois	0.25	0.39	64.5	6	50	12 859 995
Oregon	0.23	0.50	45.7	0	20	4 028 977
New Hampshire	0.23	0.23	100.0	2	3	1 330 608
West Virginia	0.21	0.51	42.1	3	9	1 844 128
New Jersey	0.20	0.51	38.4	4	46	8 958 013
Vermont	0.16	0.16	100.0	2	1	626 042
New York	0.15	0.38	39.6	5	76	19 795 791
Maine	0.15	0.15	100.0	2	2	1 329 328
Delaware	0.15	0.42	35.0	3	4	945 934
Massachusetts	0.10	0.33	31.3	5	23	6 794 422
Rhode Island	0.10	0.73	13.6	0	8	1 056 298
Hawaii	0.00	0.20	0.0	5	3	1 431 603
South Dakota	0.00	0.77	0.0	1	7	858 469

IPH = intimate partner homicide; IPV = intimate partner violence.

* Alabama and Florida were missing data for 2015.

† Total possible number of provisions is 6.

‡ Includes imputed data from Uniform Crime Reports, Supplementary Homicide Reports (26).

VERMONT had the LOWEST number of Intimate Partner Homicide Deaths in the US in 2015!! No State experienced fewer deaths! Yet, Vermont is ranked 8th from the lowest, based on population. What difference does population size make in this case?

STATISTICS ARE A “FUNNY” THING. Vermont is ranked as the 8th lowest state in the nation for Firearm-Related IPH rates in 2015 per 100,000 population, with a rate of 0.16, as seen in Appendix Table 2, above. One single IPH death in Vermont for 2015 !! Now you can see why anti-gun activists insist on “per capita” data. The data doesn’t change. They just want

Vermont to seem to be less safe than other states. See the **Ecological Fallacy cautions** under “Author Challenges” towards the end of this report.

Appendix Table 5. Model Results When Analysis Was Restricted to Nonimputed Data on IPHs*

Variable	Difference in IPH Rate (95% CI), %	P Value
IPV-related restraining order firearm possession and surrender law	-8.4 (-16.0 to -0.04)†	0.049
Control variables‡		
Region		
Northeast	-3.7 (-15.4 to 9.6)	0.56
South	22.4 (6.5 to 40.7)†	0.004
West	18.8 (5.2 to 34.1)†	0.005
Firearm ownership (SD = 13.4%)	12.8 (7.1 to 18.9)†	<0.001
Stranger homicide rate (SD = 0.83 per 100 000 persons)	1.9 (-1.7 to 5.7)†	0.31
Lagged IPH rate (SD = 0.45 per 100 000 persons)	11.4 (7.4 to 15.6)†	<0.001
Proportion of population that is African American (SD = 9.5%)	9.0 (3.2 to 15.1)†	0.002
Violent crime rate (SD = 2.13 per 100 000 persons)	8.5 (3.8 to 13.5)†	<0.001
Divorce rate (SD = 1.2 per 1000 persons)	4.1 (1.0 to 7.2)†	0.008

IPH = intimate partner homicide; IPV = intimate partner violence.

* The law being tested prohibits persons who are subject to IPV-related restraining orders from possessing firearms and requires them to surrender firearms they already have. The models included year fixed effects, region, household gun ownership, stranger homicide rate, lagged IPH rate, proportion of the population that is African American, violent crime rate, and divorce rate. The reference group is states with no law requiring surrender of firearms by persons subject to an IPV-related restraining order.

† Statistically significant ($P < 0.05$).

‡ All variables are standardized such that the percentage shown is the percentage difference in IPH rates associated with a 1-SD increase in the listed factor.

STUDY FINDINGS “EXCLUDE” VERMONT BASED ON GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION & POPULATION

Data shown in Appendix Table 5, above, shows the reduced IPH rate findings were not statistically significant for the Northeast. In addition to this geographic exclusion for Vermont, was the following explanation by the authors that speaks to the African American population:

“Other state-level variables that were related to IPH in our models were residence in the South, the prevalence of household firearm ownership, the stranger homicide rate, the lagged IPH rate, the proportion of the population that was African American, the violent crime rate, and the divorce rate. Data from a national survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that physical (excluding sexual) IPV is approximately 35% higher among African American women than white women (42). Thus, it may be that the significant coefficient for this variable reflects a higher rate of IPH among African Americans.”

IPH rate results for were found to be statistically significantly for regions with higher proportions of population which are African American. **Given that Vermont has an African American population of only 1.3%, based on US Census data, the study results have little applicability to Vermont.**

(www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/VT/PST045217),

IPH rates fell BEFORE states enacted IPV-related firearm Laws!

The authors reported a modest benefit for the 15 states which enacted IPV-related restraining order laws prohibiting firearm possession AND requiring relinquishment, finding: “9.7% lower

total IPH rates and 14.0% lower firearm-related IPH rates”. However, the authors reported that nationally Total and Firearm-Related Intimate Partner Homicide (IPH) rates **dropped by nearly 50% from 1991 to 2015** ! (“from 1.19 per 100 000 persons in 1991 to 0.60 per 100 000 persons in 2015, and the firearm-related IPH rate decreased from 0.68 to 0.36 per 100 000 persons”). The rate of drop was reportedly faster from 1991 to 2005, then continued, but dropped more slowly until 2013 in states WITHOUT restraining order firearm relinquishment laws. They reported a slight increase from 2013 to 2015. For states with restraining order firearm relinquishment laws, they reported that IPH rates dropped at the same rate, from 1991, through 2005, and continued at that rate until 2015. The authors explained why they focused on data after 2003: “We examined the association of state IPV-related firearm laws with IPH rates using data subsequent to 2003, a period in which many states enacted such laws. “

THIS MEANS THAT INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE RATES WERE FALLING DRAMATICALLY BEGINNING MANY YEARS (almost half the duration of the study) BEFORE MANY STATES ENACTED IPV-RELATED FIREARM LAWS. ALSO, A DRAMATIC DROP WAS FOUND IN STATES WITHOUT RESTRAINING ORDER FIREARM RELINQUISHMENT LAWS. THESE DATA SPEAK AGAINST EFFORTS PUSHING S.55, SEEKING TO RESTRICT FIREARMS AND ACCESSORIES and S.221, RELATED TO EXTREME RISK PROTECTION ORDERS, AS THE TREND SUGGESTS THAT OVERALL, IPH EVENTS MAY BE SELF LIMITING, AND OTHER FACTORS, AS YET UNIDENTIFIED, ARE OPERATING TO REDUCE IPH RATES WITHOUT CONFISCATORY LEGISLATION OR LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION.

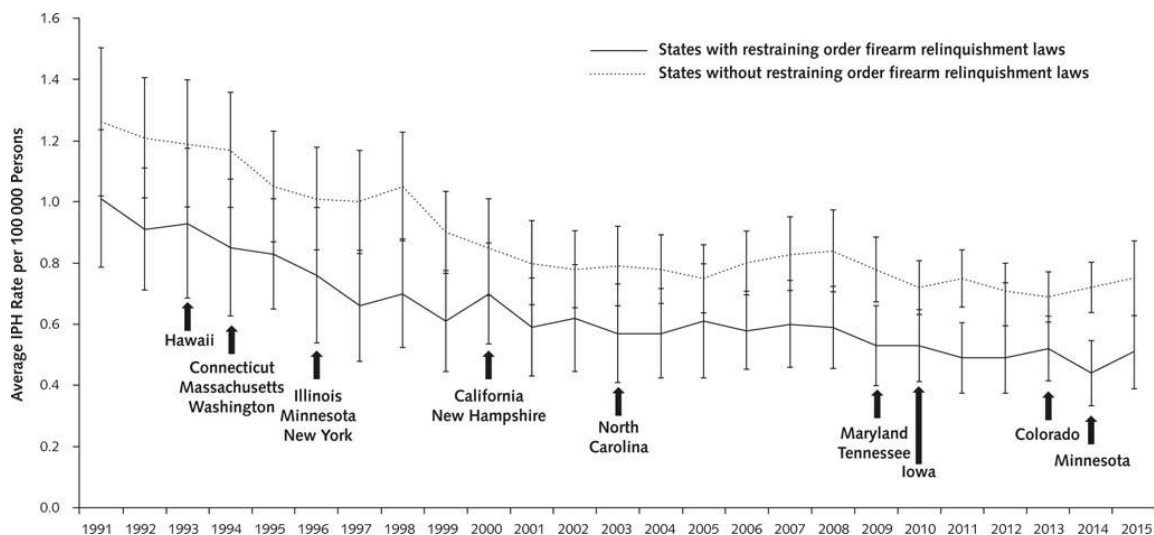


Figure 3 shows the IPH rate drop in states without relinquishment laws parallels the rate drop of those of states with those laws for most of the study period. **The data strongly suggests that factors OTHER THAN restraining order firearm relinquishment laws are operating to reduce IPH rates.**

While states with restraining order firearm relinquishment laws experienced IPH rate drops, as described in the study, the authors reported **no significant reduction in Intimate Partner Homicide (IPH) rates as a function of IPV-related misdemeanor laws, with or without**

relinquishment; nor laws authorizing REMOVAL of firearms from the scene of a domestic violence incident, nor prohibitions of firearm possession by persons convicted of stalking. (emphasis mine) See Table 1, below

Table 1. Differences in IPH Rates Associated With 4 Categories of IPV-Related Firearm Laws Considered Individually*

Category	Total IPH		Firearm-Related IPH	
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Relinquishment of firearms required	-10.8 (-16.8 to -4.4)†	0.001	-15.0 (-23.3 to -5.9)†	0.002
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IPH = intimate partner homicide; IPV = intimate partner violence.

* Negative binomial regression models included year fixed effects and controlled for region, lagged IPH rate, stranger homicide rate, household gun ownership, proportion of the population that is African American, violent crime rate, and divorce rate. The reference group was states with no law in the given category.

† Statistically significant ($P < 0.05$).

In other words, neither government REMOVAL of firearms laws nor relinquishment laws achieved statistically significant IPH reduction for these misdemeanants.

BIAS: “Annals” bias may affect study result validity

35 years ago I was a young physician critically reading and analyzing numerous medical journals. The “Annals”, a publication of the American College of Physicians, had a reputation then as a well-regarded “peer-review” journal. Medical education at the time stressed disregarding papers showing observer bias and discounting those poorly designed, as they suffered from questions of credibility and compromised result reliability. For science to be truly independent and free from bias, it must be free from political and societal bias as well. It shocked me in preparing this report to see that on April 7, 2015, the “Annals” reported that they have collaborated with 8 health professional organizations, including the ACP, ACOS, ACOG, APHA, APA, AAFP, AAP, ACEP, and the American Bar Association **to effect anti-Second Amendment legislation** in this country based on their beliefs.

“The need for reasonable federal laws, compliant with the Second Amendment, about “assault weapons” and large-capacity magazines has been debated recently. We believe that private ownership of military-style assault weapons and large-capacity magazines represents a grave danger to the public, as several recent mass shooting incidents in the United States have

demonstrated. Although evidence to document the effectiveness of the Federal Assault Weapons Ban of 1994 on the reduction of overall firearm-related injuries and deaths is limited, our organizations believe that a common-sense approach compels restrictions for civilian use on the manufacture and sale of large-capacity magazines and firearms with features designed to increase their rapid and extended killing capacity. It seems that such restrictions could only reduce the risk for casualties associated with mass shootings.”

<http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2151828/firearm-related-injury-death-united-states-call-action-from-8>

The “Annals”, has apparently become a mouthpiece for (unconstitutional) legislative activism. They have broken with the principles which earned their good reputation and no longer serve as an independent instrument of science. I can only imagine what force(s) they now serve. Their statement language resembles the Bloomberg / Everytown playbook, often heard from Vermont anti-gun activists, but has no place inserting itself into and certainly not replacing the scientific method which relies on the elimination of bias, a cornerstone underlying valid and reproducible scientific research. I now better understand the anti-gun testimonial selection of an “Annals” article.

- 1. The data source selection suggests the authors have a preconceived “anti-gun” bias.** Their choice of obtaining data from “Everytown for gun safety” is highly suspect, as Everytown is one of the largest, most active, and well funded anti-gun activists operating today. Biased data selection compromises causality interpretations.

The authors chose the 2015 data set for focus and analysis (1 of 25 years).

“Everytown for Gun Safety developed a database of state IPV-related firearm laws over time (28). Using this database, we coded 4 categories of laws and their operative provisions (a total of 6 variables) as present or absent for each state during each of the 25 years from 1991 through 2015 (Appendix Table 1). Data on these provisions for all 50 states for 2015 are shown in Appendix Tables 2 and 3.”

Their 2015 data analysis favors the author’s preconceived expectation.

- 2. Biased data source selection: neglecting legitimate research which may not fit the author’s political agenda.** A March 1, 2017 study by Susan Sorrenson, “Guns in Intimate Partner Violence: Comparing Incidents by Type of Weapon”, was published in the Journal of Women’s Health: Data from the scenes of IPV in the fifth largest U.S. city, Philadelphia, during 2013. **Of the 35,413 IPV incidents, 8,439 (23.8%) involved a weapon; 6,573 (18.6%) involved hands, fists, or feet; and 1,866 (5.3%) involved an external weapon (i.e., a weapon other than hands, fists, or feet). Of the latter, 576 (30.9%) were guns, that is, 1.6% of all incidents involved a gun.”**
- 3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5361762/>**

This study provides perspective as the “Annals” authors have you connecting IPV events to firearms, while in the Philadelphia study only 1.6% of IPV incidents involved a gun.

- 4. The authors may have a political agenda, aligned with that of the “Annals” and ACP, and are working to influence legislation based on the outcomes of their studies.**

The authors report a number of challenges they faced which may affect the validity of their analysis.

“The chief potential threat to the validity of our findings is that states that have enacted laws requiring subjects of IPV-related restraining orders to surrender their firearms may differ from those that have not in ways that were not measured. Another important limitation of this research is that even if laws are written similarly, their enforcement may vary by county, city, or town within a given state. There may also be differences in how the judicial system in each state adjudicates IPV cases and in how state law handles protective orders in general. Our findings may also reflect the effect of laws other than IPV-specific ones. **Finally, to avoid the ecological fallacy, caution must be used in drawing inferences from this study with regard to the relationship between both the main exposure variable (state laws) and the covariates and IPH risk at the individual level.” (emphasis mine)**

The author’s caution regarding the ecological fallacy should also be adopted by anti-gun activists seeking to replace individual with capitated data to avoid arriving at incorrect assumptions.

Role of the Funding Source

The authors disclose that: “This research was funded by a grant from the Evidence for Action: Investigator-Initiated Research to Build a Culture of Health program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The funder had no role in the design and conduct of the study; collection, management, analysis, or interpretation of the data; and preparation, review, or approval of the manuscript.”

However, Evidence for Action (E4A), provides funding only for certain research initiatives. From their website, “E4A will support a “matching team” overseen by a grantee organization that meets the eligibility criteria noted below. The grantee’s primary role will be to link organizations working in and with communities with strong research partners **to rigorously evaluate the health impacts of program or policy interventions.” (emphasis mine)**

That means that as an inducement to obtain funding, researchers can focus their studies on public policy interventions, biased, but “win-win” for political activist “researchers”.

www.rwjf.org/en/library/funding-opportunities/2018/evidence-for-action--matching-service.html

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