

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 child is more likely to be beaten to death by their own caregivers than to be a victim 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