

March 27, 2019

House Judiciary, et al:

**I ask that you vote NO on S.169**, a bill requiring a waiting period for the transfer of a handgun in Vermont.

**NOTICE: *In the last week, additional pertinent facts have publically surfaced regarding the suicide of Andrew Black that call into question whether this event, which was the impetus for S.22/S.169, was really a spur of the moment impulsive act or a more long standing issue.***

This is key as the sponsors of the bill are selling this one incident (Black) as the problem they are attempting to fix by instituting a waiting period. **Ultimately, the question is, does it rise to an emergency level that justifies impacting the constitutional rights of 100K Vermont citizens and law abiding gun owners** by having to endure a waiting period to transfer a firearm? If the sad event did happen, as the bill's sponsors would have you believe, it seems it would be the first recognized event in **decades** in Vermont where a waiting period might have helped. **It would further indicate that S.169 is not a pressing or valid reason to be further considered with many open questions still unresolved.** Are the sponsors taking "literary license" to use certain aspects of an event to embellish their position, leaving out other qualifying facts?

**We now know that Mr. Black already owned a firearm and it was within the household** (*Senate Judiciary hearing, 3/13/19*) prior to purchasing a second gun. **There was discussion that this original firearm was "locked up" by his parents and he did not have access to it** (*Senate Judiciary hearing, 3/13/19*). **Why, at 23 years of age, was an adult man prevented, by his parents, from accessing his own firearm?** **Would it be unreasonable to interpret that there was concern for his/their well-being?** If this is true, then there appears to be a protracted history here versus an "impulsive act" and it had been recognized by the family for some time. Additional comments have been made that he may have seen "something" on social media that triggered his actions. There are additional concerns/indicators noted that I won't elaborate on here.

**All of these things change the narrative that this was a spur of the moment action and if there had been a waiting period the event "might" have been averted.** Persons bent on taking their own life often keep trying. I am aware of an individual who attempted suicide 4 times using different methods to end their life over a number of years before succeeding with a gun on the fifth try. All forms of intervention and treatment had failed.

**Once again, this is a political gambit that really has nothing to do with Andrew Black.**

**Tragically, he has become a means to an end, used by the bill's sponsors.** This is part of a national playbook by Progressive/Socialists to restrict and impede the legal ownership of a firearm by law-abiding citizens at every possible juncture. In any other venue it would be called harassment! These same initiatives are mirrored across the country and professed by groups

such as Moms Demand Action, Brady, Giffords, and Gun Sense Vermont. They refuse to give credit that *Vermont has perennially been the safest state in the nation*. **They ignore that fact as it inconveniently demonstrates a major flaw in their ongoing rhetoric that Vermont has/had “lax” gun laws. How could it be possible to have the lowest national crime rate, no accidental gun deaths, etc. with such lax laws? The answer; just ignore the facts! Keep pressing your agenda.**

These organizations don't care about constitutional rights as they have an agenda that they feel trumps the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment and the Vermont constitution. They originate in urban centers and have no understanding, or desire to understand, what rural America is. **Vermont is classified as one of the most rural states in the nation.** Anti-gun groups have said repeatedly that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment needs to be repealed as it is not representative of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. **Lest they forget that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment was put in place to protect the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment that they love to exercise daily. In the last two weeks, New Zealand announced banning most all firearms. Yesterday, they announced they would now be restricting free speech (USA Today). New Zealander's will be soon known as “Subjects”, not citizens. Be careful legislators!**

**This bill, in another way, flies in the face of the zealous legislative focus on reducing the carbon foot print.** In 2018 there were 41,550 round trips to gun dealers to purchase a firearm. Passage of this bill in 2018, as an example, would have forced 83,100 round trips across the state to **purchase the same number firearms.** If you pass this bill, that would be hypocrisy at its worst. Does a waiting period trump the hue and cry over climate change now? **What a conundrum!**

I have attached the speaker notes that I presented to the Senate Judiciary earlier this month as they are apropos for this ongoing discussion.

## **Vote NO S.169**

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