

## **Vermont Traditions Coalition - Testimony Thursday March 27, 2019**

### **House Judiciary Committee**

#### **Re: S. 169**

In this testimony I also represent the Green Mountain Boys Shooting Club (GMBSC) and the Vermont Military History Museum, LLC, both located at White Road in Eden. These Lamoille County groups are comprised of over 450 annual dues paying members and have held a variety of shooting and historical events since 1999. The largest is a July event attracting 300-400 participants with between 1500 and 2,000 paying spectators. That event also features food vendors and, in the interest of safety, we hire the Lamoille Ambulance service which provides an on-site ambulance with EMT team during operating hours. The multiplier economic effects of similar events is well documented and a great help to the local economy.

Plans to construct a military history museum and events building at the site were placed on hold last year following the passage of the large capacity magazine ban and reservations for many summer events have stalled due to the out-of-state attendees being uncertain about their legal peril when traveling to Vermont. Many acquisitions of small items and large equipment are planned for the museum, including vehicles from WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam which may have included some magazines and belt feeding devices affected by the ban.

While not all of our events have been competitive in nature, the museum and club shooting range has also been used for training and educational components including the historical display of such vehicles and weaponry at our summer events. The local Boy Scout Campground is using our range for off-site hunter education and shooting safety classes for youth from all over New England.

Without the fundraising capabilities of these and yet to be imagined events associated with the GMBSC and Vermont Military History Museum, most of these events will likely cease and the club may have to close, foregoing any future opportunities for the site to host safe and economically robust activities.

Senator Rodgers and I had requested that S. 1 (now Section 1, S.169) include language including "historical and educational events" along with "organized shooting competitions" already in the bill. While this will not facilitate our ability to pursue acquisitions for the museum that would violate 13 VSA 4021 otherwise, it would allow for the free and predictable scheduling of future events that are literally the lifeblood of

this important community organization. We no longer seek that amendment at this time but look forward to discussing the unique aspects of a militaria museum with you at another time.

As with the CMP shoots and other event organizers, we are only asking your support for a legislative remedy that allows us to continue these traditional organized events and to provide certainty to visiting participants that they will be in compliance with Vermont statutes. This Section of S. 169 will provide that certainty.

On behalf of the GMBSC and its members,

William Moore, Range Safety Officer

Green Mountain Boys Shooting Club

Vermont Military History Museum