

To VT House Judiciary Committee:

I am opposed to any waiting period on firearm purchases. But I also have some constructive comments on how it should work if it happens anyway.

If the purpose is truly Suicide Prevention, as many have stated, then one must recognize that suicide-by-firearm can only be prevented by a waiting period for those people who do not already own a gun. In that light it is logical that those who already own a gun need not be subject to this waiting period as it cannot attain it's goal. Provide an exemption for gun-owners. A hunting license, a carry permit from any state (many of us Vermonters have permits in other states). Any proof of ownership. To impose a waiting period upon a person who already owns a firearm for the sole purpose of preventing (delaying) suicide by firearm is beyond practical.

I shall also offer you some professional observation. First the necessary disclaimer that I am speaking only for myself; I am not speaking for any agency or organization to whom I may refer.

I have been a volunteer EMT for 37 years and a medico-legal death scene investigator for 18 years. I have seen many suicides up close and personal. A portion of those have been by firearm. I have never once known of one in my personal experience who used a gun that they had not owned for some time. Now of course we know of a few cases that have have been with recent purchases. I am saying it is the exception rather than the normal circumstances. Suicide does not depend on a firearm. Anyone can go into any grocery store and buy a couple bottles of liquid products, mix them together, take a good inhalation of the vapor and it's all over.

During my working years I traveled the state for business. I would often visit gun shops around Vermont. This bill would deny me the purchase of any handgun in such a circumstance because I would never be in the same place the next day. In that respect this is indeed an infringement on my right to buy a gun.

Bottom line, to subject thousands of gun owners to a a delay for the possible benefit to one or two people every few years is an outrageous disservice. It is an abhorrent impact-benefit ratio.

Article 14 of the VT Constitution states very clearly that "the people shall have the right to keep and bear arms for protection of self and state" it does not say the people shall have that right tomorrow.

"Freedom and Unity" Denying freedom certainly does not promote unity.

Thank you,  
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