

This legislation is being proposed supposedly, in response to the unfortunate suicide of a young man several months ago. The presumption being that if he had only had a couple of days to think about it, it wouldn't have happened. I find this to be an ill thought out conclusion. My observation has been that once a person chooses to end their life the tool makes very little difference.

Several years ago when the beloved comedian Robin Williams ended his life there was no outcry to ban belts and ties. The discussion was how sad it is that a person's mental state can deteriorate that they lose the will to live. This is true in nearly every instance of suicide. In Japan access to firearms is extremely limited yet there is twice the incidence of suicide in that country. Hanging is the most common method in Japan but it's not unheard of for people to drink enough soy sauce to kill themselves. A person intent upon hurting themselves will find a way whether it be a gun, a rope, drugs or a tall building.

Mental health is the place the legislature should be focusing their efforts on. It is small consolation to anyone to say "Well at least your loved one didn't shoot themselves, they only hanged themselves."

A short while back in 2016 Vermont experienced the mass murder of 5 innocent teenagers at the hands of Steven Bourgojn, a suicidal man, who decided to crash his car into another in hopes of ending his life. It is my understanding that the perpetrator tried to get some help for his ongoing breakdown. He was unsuccessful in getting help. In 2013 Robert Dellinger killed 2 in a similar automotive suicide attempt. In 2015 Karri Benoir killed a young father of three, again, in an attempted vehicular murder/suicide.

Perhaps the legislature could work with those in mental health and try and find some ways to improve treatment options rather than impose regulations upon those that are not part of the problem.

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