

As a VT taxpayer, two small businesses owner, father of three and a true native Vermonter I am asking for S169 to be voted NO there has been enough gun laws passed in this state and we need to focus on other areas not just passing feel good laws. I don't understand when governments started responding to a single family's request for things and not in the way of majority voters and tax payers. Please vote no on S169.

Sincerely Stephen Taran

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Please oppose S 169.

This legislative session is taking it's toll on the hard working and honest citizens of Vermont.

Most citizens are being punished for the works of both criminals and those needing mental health care associated with and up to suicide.

We have been asking for efforts concerning mental health care in Vermont now for several years and the effort put into it from the legislature does not in any way meet the need existing. This is where the real effort belongs.

Thank you,

Mark

Mark Wells

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To members of the VT House Judiciary Committee:

I urge you to reject S.169 as bad law. It is not sufficiently based on factual data and does not address a solution that would have positive impact in Vermont.

The law would not pass strict scrutiny where the actual effects are proven beyond the level of a "good feeling".

As we are entering the last days of the legislative session for 2019, I am afraid that bad laws will be quickly passed out of committees in the last few days without adequate public hearings, review, and analysis by all appropriate committees, and properly published for citizens to review prior to any votes being taken. We have seen in past years the last-minute gut and change bills, the last-minute modifications that are not properly vetted, and I am afraid that this

year will be no different unless you take a stand. Current laws on the books more than adequately address concerns, provided that they are enforced (which does not always appear to be the case).

David Schuler
Jericho VT

Madame Speaker :

I'd like to respectfully request that you table or trash S169. I cannot see that this law will do anything

but inconvenience law-abiding citizens, and will NOT affect suicide or homicide rates in Vermont.

As we saw over the weekend in Tunbridge, laws prohibiting the possession or acquisition of firearms

(in this case, a by convicted felon) do not prevent crimes or tragedies. Furthermore, if the perpetrator is bent on self-destruction , the law is futile.

Thank you for your consideration,

- Paul Gross

My family has been in Vermont since 1790. On behalf of my wife & I - and all of us, I respectfully ask you to oppose S-169. Tom Egan

I ask you to please vote NO to S.169 and not move the bill out of committee. A right delayed is a right denied.

Thank you
Ben Broe
Burlington VT
802-760-7804

Good Morning, My name is Christen Szeg and I live in Tunbridge. I'm sending this email to simply voice my opposition to S.169. I have emailed my representative as well. I find it rather troubling that the crux of this potential legislation is a waiting period for a law abiding citizen to purchase a firearm. I simply ask what's stopping anybody from enacting a waiting period on any other right that is guaranteed by the constitution? The constitution shouldn't come with a waiting period.

Very few people purchase firearms for the sole purpose of committing suicide, if a person commits suicide with a firearm most often the case is that the firearm was owned by them for some period of time prior.

Maybe we should focus on the state of mental health in this state, as opposed to passing legislation that serves little to no purpose in the actual saving of lives. I feel this is just a poor excuse to enact further controls on law abiding citizens being able to exercise a constitutionally guaranteed right.

Thank you for your time,

Christen Szeg

cszeg@mail.saabnet.com

I am writing to you to request that you please Vote NO on the passage of this bill. This is legislation meant to make everyone feel better but will do nothing to stop anyone intent on using a gun in the commission of a crime - especially criminals. A waiting period is only for the law abiding. Mental health decisions made by a doctor regarding a patient seems to be ethically wrong, going behind the patient's back and reporting them when they first should be discussing issues they might notice with the patient first. This is just confiscation of the Rights of the People.

Please vote NO.

Thank you.

Kasey Baker

I ask that you vote NO on this knee jerk piece of legislation.

It will do little, if anything, to protect those from self-inflicted gun shot suicides and is only a guise for further government control of a constitutionally protected freedom. Those most likely to use this method of suicide likely already own one or more firearms. This is likely why Vermonters, unfortunately, choose this method more than others knowing it is typically sure and swift. This piece of legislation, like any gun law, infringes on the rights of Vermonters. No citizen should have to ask government permission before obtaining a firearm. Instead, government should only act upon those who use them improperly.

I feel for the parents of this tragedy, but their child, in a moment of weakness, made a permanent and selfish decision to take their life. The parents are now being selfish in trying to evade their own personal responsibility for failing to help their son through his issues.

Don't, yet again, make lawful gun owners the scapegoat for feel-good legislation that infringes on our rights.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Duquette

Citizen of Milton

Dear Representative Graham,
I am respectfully asking you to vote down S-169 for a number of reasons. This is another gun control bill poorly disguised as suicide prevention. This bill would prevent an abused woman, who would not be able to purchase a firearm in a time of need. Of course, it also violates the constitution.

Again, please VOTE NO ON S 169

Rich Moore

Corinth VT 05039

To whom it may concern,

I respectfully requests that you vote against the senate bill 169 for the reason that it is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. S.169 is dubbed as a bill to prevent suicides but the only suicides that could be possibly prevented by this bill are so few in our state that it makes no sense to impose waiting periods, especially on a constitutionally protected right.

Thank you,
Jason Knapp
Vermont

I am writing to ask that you oppose bill S169 as written. VT doesn't this legislation. Thank you very much.

Kevin French

Quechee VT

Please oppose S.169!

As this bill would render helpless those who have an urgent self-defense need.

Thank You,

Vincent & Peggy Turco

961 Branch Brook Rd

Mount Holly, Vt.

Vermont does NOT need this

These kinds of needless incremental encroachments on our rights will only further divide our state and foster contempt for our law makers

Please vote NO to S169!!

Lloyd Georgeson lwq3rd@yahoo.com

Please vote NO on S.169. I gave my testimonial against this bill at VT Tech when it was S.22 and again later in our House Chamber. The latter evening was marked with embarrassment when we were repeatedly told NOT to wave the American Flag!

Please vote NO on S.169.

Dr. Daniel J. Monger

New Haven, VT

Committee Members,

I respectfully request you vote NO on S.169.

This bill mistakenly assumes that all Vermont gun owners/buyers to be assumed guilty before they prove themselves innocent. That is unconstitutional.

It assumes victims of domestic violence to be incapable of making a decision whether to buy a firearm to defend themselves. They're not.

It also assumes everyone else is somehow too irrational to employ any means to defend their families. A very narrow-minded way to think.

The clear majority of those opposing the bill at the hearings show the people of Vermont don't want or need S.169. Please vote NO on S.169.

Thank you.

William Waizenegger

Rutland, Vermont

Representative Bailey,

I would like to cordially ask you to oppose S.169, the bill that would mandate a waiting period for firearms purchases. I prepared the following condensed information that I would like to share with you, which outlines the research that has been done on the subject of the efficacy of waiting period laws in decreasing firearm deaths. Please give it careful consideration.

I would also like to take this opportunity to let you know that suicide prevention is an issue that is very dear to my heart, and I would urge you to vote in favor of any measure that comes before you that would expand the states mental healthcare resources.

Thank You!

Skyler Bailey, Burlington

The Lack of Evidence in the Body of Statistical Analysis for the Efficacy of a Waiting Period Law for Firearms Purchases in Vermont

Skyler Baldwin Bailey

March 13, 2019

A bill introduced in the Vermont legislature in 2019 would mandate a waiting period for firearm purchases for the purpose of providing a “cooling off” period for those who would make a firearms purchase with the express intent of committing suicide or perpetrating violence. While analyses of the effect of waiting period laws have been published by a number of researchers, the evidence they provide is either faulty, inconclusive, or indicates no statistical outcomes attributable to such policies. There is no body of evidence that waiting periods for firearm purchases have caused decreased firearm fatalities in the states where they have been implemented, nor that one would do so if enacted in Vermont.

The preponderance of evidence generated by a large amount of research points toward the ineffectiveness of waiting periods for firearm purchases in reducing gun deaths. A study by researchers from the University of Cincinnati and Arizona State University published in 2012 found no measurable statistical effect on gun violence following the implementation of waiting period laws.^[i] A study published in 2000 in the Journal of the American Medical Association found no change in homicide rates subsequent to the implementation of waiting periods in conjunction with background checks for firearm purchases. The study indicated that these policies may be associated with a small reduction in the rate of gun suicide for those age 55 and older, but noted increases in other suicide methods in a possible “substitution effect,” resulting in no reduction in the rate of suicide overall.^[ii] A 2003 report from the Center for Disease Control found insufficient evidence for any determination that waiting periods measurably impact firearm fatalities, noting the “inconsistent evidence of effectiveness, and limitations in

design and execution of available studies.”^[iii] Of the research that has been done on the subject of waiting periods, the vast majority is in agreement that there is no, or very ambiguous evidence that these policies have caused any decrease in firearm-related deaths where they have been implemented.

In contrast to the broad body of research, one oft-cited 2017 study published by the National Academy of Sciences claims that waiting period laws applied exclusively to handguns caused a 17 percent reduction in gun homicide and a 7-11 percent reduction in gun suicides.^[iv] In peer review it has been noted that this study failed to account for relevant variables, relied upon statistical comparisons among states geographically rather than within states temporally to determine effect, and measured change cumulatively over long periods of time rather than running analysis looking for the “statistical cliff” that should be evident upon the implementation of a policy whose full effect would become apparent within the length of the waiting period itself. In a CNN article from October 2017, co-author of the study, Deepak Malhotra, minimized the suicide claim when he stated that there was evidence to, “suggest that suicides also are reduced, but further research might be necessary on that issue.”^[v]

Ambiguous or negative evidence of the efficacy of waiting period laws within the extant body of research necessitates review of local statistics to determine the potential effect of a waiting period law in Vermont. Of the 1,308 suicides committed in Vermont from 2005-2018^{[vi][vii]}, there have been two reported cases wherein the method of suicide was a firearm purchased within days of the fatality. This amounts to 0.15 percent of Vermont’s suicides during that period. The possibility of the victims in these cases remaining suicidal after the term of the proposed waiting period or substituting another suicide method confounds assertions that they could be counted as lives potentially saved by such a policy.^[viii]

Research at the national level has produced no body of evidence indicating that mandated waiting periods for firearms purchases have caused reductions in either homicide or suicide rates in the states where they have been implemented. The evidence for any positive effect of a waiting period law in Vermont is negligible, and other policies have far more evidence indicating positive result from their implementation.^{[ix][x]} Available evidence suggests no measurable effect from the implementation of a waiting period law, and virtual certainty that other recommended suicide prevention policies, if pursued, would yield real, measurable and sustainable benefit to Vermonters in crisis.

Endnotes:

^[i] Matthew Makarios and Travis Pratt, “The Effectiveness of Policies and Programs That Attempt to Reduce Firearm Violence: A Meta-Analysis,” accessed March 13, 2019, <http://jonathanstray.com/papers/Gun%20Violence%20Meta-analysis.pdf>.

^[ii] Kertscher, Tom, “No statistical evidence that a waiting period for handgun purchases reduces gun violence, lawmaker says,” Politifact, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.politifact.com/wisconsin/statements/2015/apr/27/van-wanggaard/no-evidence-waiting-period-handgun-purchases-reduc/>.

^[iii] US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “First Reports Evaluating the Effectiveness of Strategies for Preventing Violence: Early Childhood Home Visitation and Firearms Laws Findings from the Task Force on Community Preventive Services,” page 15, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5214.pdf>.

^[iv] Michael Luca, Deepak Malhotra and Christopher Poliquin, “Handgun waiting periods reduce gun deaths,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, published online 2017, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5699026/>.

^[v] Larned, Victoria, “Handgun waiting period laws save lives, study says,” CNN, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/10/16/health/waiting-period-firearms-study/index.html>.

^[vi] Vermont Department of Health, “Suicide Mortality – Data Brief: Vermont Injury Prevention Program,” accessed March 13, 2019, http://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HSVR_injury_suicidemortality_2017.pdf.

^[vii] Vermont Public Radio, Gunshots: Vermont Gun Deaths, 2011-2016, The role of guns in life - and death - in Vermont, accessed March 13, 2019, <http://projects.vpr.net/gunshots-vermont-gun-data>.

^[viii] Jurgens, Rick, “Cheryl Hanna had sought treatment before suicide,” VTDigger, August 5, 2014, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://vtdigger.org/2014/08/05/cheryl-hanna-sought-treatment-suicide/>.

^[ix] Vermont Suicide Prevention Center, “VT Suicide Prevention Platform,” accessed March 13, 2019, http://vtspc.org/vt-suicide-prevention-platform/increase-public-knowledge/?doing_wp_cron=1552260605.9624710083007812500000.

^[x] Faher, Mike, “New stats show mental health patients waiting for treatment,” VT Digger, February 12, 2019, accessed March 13, 2019, https://vtdigger.org/2019/02/12/new-stats-show-mental-health-patients-waiting-for-treatment/?is_wppwa=tr

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Please vote note on S169

Thank you for representing me a registered voter in Vermont

Craig

Craig A. Rivers
251 Town Hill Rd.
Poultney Vt. 05764

Dear members of the committee. Please do not move forward with S169.

Sincerely,

Paul DeCausemacker

Colchester

To the House Judiciary Committee:

I am hoping you vote not to move forward with S-169. On Friday, March 1st, my cousin from Pompano Beach Fl, Tammy Ramos-Eberle, was shot and killed by her ex husband John Eberle (can Google it). Florida has both a 3 day waiting period and a red flag law. Even though there were past domestic disturbances (he was never charged), his family knew he was trying to obtain a gun and said nothing. This law did not help. Also, he waited the full three days to get his handgun. On the same day, he went to my cousin's house and killed her in front of their youngest child. Neither law helped. If someone is set on committing violence against others or themselves, I cannot be convinced that any gun law will help. Please consider my cousin's story when voting. Thank you. Don Ramos, Stowe

Judiciary Committee Members,

Please do not support S 169.

This bill is an emotional reaction to an unfortunate suicide earlier this year fueled by lobbying groups.

Vermont does not have a gun problem it has a people problem.

Thank you

Peter Ludlow

I feel bad for anyone who has lost a love one to suicide but S-169 will not solve anything. My nephew and cousin committed suicide one with a gun and the other with pills. Instead of trying to change things to effect others lives because of the loss my family has suffered they work with suicide prevention. My family has suffered yet my family has not tried to effect people from buying a pistol or pills.

Please vote no.

Rodney Chayer

Registered voter from Duxbury, VT

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Dear Chairman Grad and House Judiciary Committee Members,

Self defense is reflexive, innate, and derived from primal instinctive self preservation actions. When testing rudimentary brain function, physicians use signs of purposeful withdrawal from pain or noxious stimuli as indicators of deep brain activity. Many comatose patients retain some instinctive self preservation defenses!

With respect, Speaker Johnson, you can not legislate away self defense, self preservation! Such legislation violates the laws of nature. There is no compromising, interpreting, modifying nor explaining away this immutable property of human and animal behavior, common to the smallest single cell organism to the largest Blue Whale and African Elephant.

Imposing a waiting period on self defense in the form of delaying the purchase of self defense weapons is contrary to the laws nature, against the public good, morally wrong, in violation of the US Constitution's Second Amendment and in violation of Torah law which allows for the protecting of one's life even if such action violates the laws of the Sabbath.

Hope, wishing and desire for favorable outcomes, alone, are not reasonable justification for invoking these certain and very serious, and at times, life threatening violations. We would all like to be able to reduce the number of suicides. The few suicides which seem impulsive have, in almost all cases, been considered and contemplated over time, rendering purchase waiting periods moot. Yes, there is a moment when an action occurs, wherein there was a moment immediately prior to the event and one immediately subsequent. The moment of throwing of the switch, however, does not carry the implications of "impulsive behavior". Of critical importance to the discussion is that there is no scientific evidence that an arbitrary temporal delay obstructing the acquisition of a single tool, whether a firearm or any other of a myriad of potential available alternatives, significantly reduces suicides. To make a positive difference, please address other avenues which may be expected to impact suicide reduction, particularly suicide's underlying causes, instead of the suicide's choice of tools.

On balance, the certainty of lives lost is great and well documented as a result of interference with self defense secondary to delaying firearm purchases. While a reduction in suicide "on impulse" as a result of forced delay of firearm purchases is theoretical at best and would be expected to be minimal if present at all.

Finally, S.169 firearm purchase waiting periods harm and jeopardize innocent law abiding Vermonters, whose self defense needs are innate, reflexive and instinctive. S.169 can not be expected to accomplish your goal.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jeffrey Kaufman, M.D.

Burlington, VT
