

House Judiciary Committee January 11, 2022

Re: S. 30 - An act relating to prohibiting possession of firearms within hospital buildings

Madame Chair, Committee Members, other witnesses and friends,

In order for our Vermont Citizen Legislature to exercise a truly human scale democratic process, it is vital to have all people in the same building, especially the legislators themselves. Of all the aspects of "missing" each other during the remote session, I am convinced the most damaging aspect is due to legislators not being allowed to mingle and share between themselves. As the architects and practitioners of the art, legislating is a hugely interpersonal and intimate act of compromise and convictions. Accept no substitutes please.

Vermont Traditions Coalition is deeply concerned that important legislative & complex policy issues that will affect Vermonter's everyday lives are being made over remote "environments" like Zoom without many stakeholders being part of the deeper process. While "access" may be augmented by Zoom and other observational technologies, these also destroy relationship building, and hinder the vital necessity of interacting across the political spectrum. The lifeblood of democracy is found there.

Remote Session creates a viral isolationism while "In The Building" legislating is the true remedy and a vaccine against badly drafted and disconnected policy decisions. Zoom creates "Watchers" not stakeholders. Zoom inhibits crafting and denies creativity. Creation requires a messy human stew of ingredients no video magic can replicate and simulation is not the food of the political soul... It is a pap or gruel served to slaves not citizens.

Many Representatives and Senators have stated themselves that they do better legislation in person. Imagine the isolation and lack of perspective our many newest legislators must experience as they are asked to choose their Votes on even basic procedural votes and amendments. Experienced legislators must pause and listen to that quiet voice inside telling you the same isolation has crept into your minds at times.

Many citizens and legislators have told us they desire a "stop & hold" on many complex issues and that constituents are already demanding the same of you in recent days.

Pending likely changes in the pandemic and a return to the saner, more human experience of human scale democratic process, we request that testimony be halted after initial review and No Action be taken on S. 30 and similar social policy issues.

Specifically, any Amendments to S.30 cannot possibly be properly vetted and reflect the consensus built in a truly human scale democratic process under current conditions and remote rules. Rep. Notte's Strike All Amendment is a perfect example of several

complex issues that cannot possibly be robustly vetted under current remote conditions.

With exceptions linked either to budgetary demands and emergency related standards necessary for the health and freedom of Vermonters, we ask that any further consideration be halted indefinitely following this week's testimony.

In Liberty and with my regards,

William R. Moore

Firearms Policy Analyst

Vermont Traditions Coalition

vermonttraditions.org