



April 17, 2023

The Honorable Robert E. Craven, SR.
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary
Room 35, Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support for H 5300, H 5367, H 5434, H 5891, H 5892, H 5893, H 5894, H 6069 -- 2023

Dear Chairman Craven,

I am writing to you today in support of urgent legislation to reduce gun violence in Rhode Island. Last legislative session we passed numerous common-sense measures to protect Rhode Islanders from senseless gun violence, including prohibiting high-capacity magazines, banning the open carry of shot guns and rifles, and raising the legal age for firearm and ammunition purchase from 18 to 21. The bills before you today, from promoting safe storage to ending the sale of assault weapons in our state, will strengthen gun safety legislation in Rhode Island and protect our citizens from the gun violence epidemic.

To protect Rhode Islanders from gun violence, we must take action to ban the possession and sale of assault weapons. Assault weapons—generally high-velocity, semiautomatic firearms—allow shooters to fire more rounds of ammunition over a short period of time. Research has shown that states with an assault weapon ban experience a lower chance of an active shooter event and that a federal assault weapon ban could reduce mass shooting deaths by 70%.¹ Rhode Island would join states such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York in taking action to ban assault weapons.

The passage of these bills is also an issue of equity. Gun violence has a disproportionate impact on communities of color: Black Americans are 10 times more likely than people of other races to die by gun homicide, and Black women are twice as likely to be fatally shot in an instance of domestic violence.²

We have the power to make positive change in Rhode Island and reduce the fatal impact of gun violence on all communities. I hope you will join me in supporting these important pieces of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sabina Matos".

Sabina Matos

¹ Everytown for Gun Safety. "Solutions: Prohibit Assault Weapons." [Prohibit Assault Weapons | Everytown | Everytown](#)

² Edmund, Marissa. "Gun Violence Disproportionately and Overwhelmingly Hurts Communities of Color." Center for American Progress. [Gun Violence Disproportionately and Overwhelmingly Hurts Communities of Color - Center for American Progress](#)



Lieutenant Governor
State of Rhode Island

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
The Honorable Jason Knight, Brandon Potter, Justine Caldwell, and Jennifer Boylan
Nicole McCarty, Esq.