

Roberta DiMezza

From: Heidi Lavigne <heidi.lavigne@gmail.com>
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To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Testimony in support of —H-7051

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Hello,

Please see below testimony for myself. I have been caring around the clock for a toddler who is sick with the flu the last 4 days and have been unable to properly format this. I plan to attend tonight to give this testimony in person, despite the difficult personal circumstances of this week. This is a bill of great import for the residents and children of our state.

"Hello and thank you for your time.

I am here to show my support for bill, H-7051. I live in West Cranston within earshot of the municipal police shooting range, which is also across the street from both the public Middle and High Schools. I am a wife and a mother to an 18-month-old. I feel so strongly about this issue that even after days of caring for a toddler with the flu, I am here, for her. My daughter was just 5 months old when we moved to this neighborhood last January. We partially chose this neighborhood because of the proximity to these schools. Beautiful track and field, tennis courts, bike path, open fields, and Meshanticut State Park, all right there. But not long after we unpacked our boxes, the occasional pops in the distance became an unbearable barrage. I work from home talking to students my entire day and I need to be able to focus. My daughter deserves to spend her days playing in our backyard, enjoying beautiful birds chirping and bugs buzzing, not the sound of violent shooting from sunrise to sunset.

It never occurred to me that such disregard for the well-being of our children could be possible, and by our police department, in our case. One moment these children are thrown into an active shooting drill, the next, expected to drown it out and think about what, calculus? How do you do that simultaneously? Despite what our Chief of Police claims, you cannot hear the difference between good and bad gunfire. You just hear "bang, bang, bang." Beyond the emotional and psychological consequences of this situation, there is nothing to be said of the potential hearing loss suffered by our children. As confirmed by Brown University, the shooting at this specific range is 500x above the city noise ordinance of 55db. Why are we willing to roll the dice with our children's emotional and physical well-being in such a cavalier manner? Children have no choice, they are obligated to go to school. How will we ever catch up to other states if we don't take a hard look at ourselves and strive for better? I think we all should be able to agree that this is the furthest thing from okay, and should never be allowed to happen again in Rhode Island, which is why I fully support this bill's passage and urge all of you to fully support it as well. Thank you."

Kind regards,

Heidi Lavigne

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Please forgive any typos or formatting inconsistencies as I am sending this from my cell phone.