

Roberta DiMezza

From: Cindy Capra <cindycapranp@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 11:32 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: RE: Support of House Bills H7373 and H7217

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Cindy Capra
41 North Lake Drive
Barrington

March 13, 2024

RE: Support of House Bills H7373 and H7217

Chairman Craven and Members of the House Judiciary:

My name is Cindy Capra, I live in Barrington and my Representative is Jennifer Boylan. I am a volunteer with the Rhode Island Coalition Against Gun Violence.

I'm here in support of Rep. Caldwell's secure storage bill, 7373, and Rep. Knight's assault weapons ban, 7217.

I grew up in Massachusetts in a home with guns, as my father was an avid sportsman. I was lucky that my father's golden rule was that his guns were stored locked and unloaded, in a locked gun safe, behind a locked false wall. My father was adamant about gun storage because he believed this kept his three children safe. He knew this to be the right thing to do as a responsible gun owner, and this was in the 1970s!

In my adult profession as a nurse practitioner in RI, it is protocol at routine health care visits to ask adolescent, pediatric patients and their parents, if there are guns in the house. Health care providers are trained that this is a vital question because of the danger of accidental or intentional shootings and suicides, if guns are unsecured in a home with youth. Gun safety is very definitely a public health issue. Gun owners must be held legally accountable for safe storage, to ensure that access to guns by youth is prevented, and that theft is curtailed as another avenue for access for purposes of crime and mass shootings. We need Bill H7373 for the safety of RI children.

Another public health threat exists in the form of assault weapons. Data from countless studies and consensus groups provide facts that demonstrate higher tolls of death and devastating

injury occur when assault weapons are used in mass shootings. The only reason to possess an assault weapon is to have the power to threaten, or kill and maim in larger numbers. A *secondary* public health toll that results from access to assault weapons is the psychological trauma triggered by horrific mass shooting events, which now occur with such appalling frequency that we have begun to accept them as part of daily life in America. The fear and despair that schoolchildren and adults experience contributes to the epidemic of depression and anxiety health care providers like myself see in practice. The trauma is of course magnified enormously in families, schools and communities for whom assault weapon shootings have occurred closer to hand, but if nothing changes to prevent access to assault weapons, it seems likely that it is only a matter of time before RI residents have to face such tragic consequences. Please support Bill H7217 to prohibit assault weapons in RI.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of both these important bills- H7373 and H7217. Please vote these bills out of committee and send them to the Floor with a recommendation of passage.

Sincerely,

Cindy Capra APRN, FNP-BC, MS

Certified Family Nurse Practitioner

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