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Re: Support of House Bills H7373 and H7217

Dear Chairman Craven and Members of the House Judiciary

Gun violence has become an almost daily occurrence in Rhode Island. Rhode Island's experience is just a sample of what is occurring nationally. Local newspapers and TV stations have daily reports of gun violence, some of which result in the loss of life. Communities throughout the United States are experiencing an erosion of a sense of safety and freedom to shop, attend social, sporting, and musical events, and attend religious services. No place, city, state, or family is immune from this grotesque assault on safety and human life. "We are all created equal, that we are endowed with the unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," is the founding principle of our nation that is being threatened and stolen every day by the unwanted intrusion of guns into our physical spaces and in our psyche.

Christine Emba, in her 2018 article, [We all know what guns are for](#), cuts to the essence of our gun violence epidemic, "The one factor that enables the overwhelming number of U. S. gun deaths, our routine mass murders, our lather-rinse-and-repeat cycle of grief, acrimony and forgetting is the ubiquity of the gun. It is an object simply performing the role it was meant to perform. Guns are for killing."

"This is their purpose; this is what they are meant for and designed to do. When the question of gun control is viewed in light of that essential fact, the banality of our current debate — and our proposed "solutions" — becomes scandalously clear." The design and intent of assault weapons and large-capacity clips are to maim and kill as many humans as possible in the shortest amount of time as possible. They were not designed for hunting or self-defense in a civil society.

As of Dec. 7, 2023, more than 40,167 people have died from gun violence in the U.S., according to the [Gun Violence Archive](#) — which is an average of almost 118 deaths each day. There have been six mass murders to date in 2024. This travesty will not stop until everyday citizens and their representatives make the necessary and challenging decision to regulate assault weapons and enact additional gun safety legislation, such as safe storage.

Civil Society expects its elected representatives to responsibly exercise their duty to regulate the manufacture, sale, distribution, licensing, and types of weapons permitted to be purchased, owned, and carried in the public commons. Our society's emotional, psychological, and physical health, well-being, and safety require you to act and support **House Bills H7373 and H7217**.