

March 10, 2024

Testimony in support of House Bills H7373 and H7217

Honorable Chairman Craven, and Members of the HRI House Judiciary Committee,

I would like to register my support for Rep. Caldwell's safe firearm storage bill (H7373) and for Rep. Knight's Rhode Island assault weapons ban (H 7217).

These two bills are but small steps in a necessary campaign to curb gun violence and to make Rhode Island a safer place to live.

As you probably know, gun violence is the number one killer of children in our country. By requiring the safe storage of firearms, Rhode Island could cut down on the unauthorized use of guns by distraught, angry, or otherwise disturbed persons who might otherwise be tempted to grab a weapon they should not be able to acquire.

And by banning assault weapons, those deadly weapons of war which can spew a torrent of bullets under the mere pressure of a finger, the Rhode Island public can be made measurably more safe.

I volunteer as a technical assistant in the middle school in our town, teaching sixth-graders basic skills of carpentry, wiring, and mechanics. If the school was ever attacked by a deranged person with a gun, as has sadly happened in so many other schools in our nation, I do not know if I would have the courage to stand up in front of my students to offer a bodily screen of protection. I hope I will never have to find out.

Please pass these two important bills out of Committee, for passage by the full RI House of Representatives.

Thank you,

William W. Smith III
244 Hull Cove Farm Rd,
Jamestown, RI 02835