

TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND
RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO RHODE ISLAND 2025 GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION

- WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown, pursuant to Rhode Island statute and the Town of Charlestown Charter, is vested with the authority of administering the affairs of the Town of Charlestown, Rhode Island; and
- WHEREAS, the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified on December 15, 1791 as part of the Bill of Rights, protects the individual right of the people to keep and bear arms; and
- WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008), affirmed an individual's right to possess firearms, unconnected with service in a militia, for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home; and
- WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court in *United States v. Miller*, 307 U.S. 174 (1939), opined that firearms that are part of ordinary military equipment, or with use that could contribute to the common defense, are protected by the Second Amendment; and
- WHEREAS, Article I, Section 22 of the Rhode Island Constitution, adopted in 1842, provides that ***"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."***; and
- WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown to declare its support of the United States Constitution and the Rhode Island Constitution; and
- WHEREAS, the Charlestown Town Council desires to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens; and
- WHEREAS, R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-41. Government firearm registration prohibited specifically says, ***"No government agency of this state or its political subdivisions shall keep or cause to be kept any list or register of privately owned firearms or any list or register of the owners of those firearms; provided, that the provisions of this section shall not apply to firearms which have been used in committing any crime of violence, nor to any person who has been convicted of a crime of violence."***; and
- WHEREAS, Rhode Island firearm purchase requirements already include a background check, a seven-day waiting period, and a "Blue Card" for the purchase of handguns; and additionally, a lengthy process for obtaining a concealed carry permit; and
- WHEREAS, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Gun Violence Solutions report that ***"Rhode Island had the lowest overall gun death rate and gun suicide rate in the country in 2022."*** – is further evidence of the effectiveness of laws already in existence in Rhode Island; and
- WHEREAS, the so-called "assault weapons" targeted in proposed legislation is sweepingly broad and includes many semiautomatic rifles, shotguns, and handguns in common competition and hunting usage - none of which have been part of the so-called "gun problem."; and
- WHEREAS, these bills not only penalize law-abiding citizens from exercising their Constitutional right to own a firearm, but they also damage federally licensed firearms dealers, who are Rhode Island business owners. They would most certainly restrict their sales and livelihood; and
- WHEREAS, the Rhode Island General Assembly, in its 2025 legislative session, has pending before it bills **H5436** and **S 359**, the Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025, which would prohibit the possession of "assault weapons," defined very broadly to include a wide range of semiautomatic firearms. In order to be exempt, in the current proposed legislation, the weapon

must, within twelve (12) months of the bill's passage, be registered seemingly in violation of R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-41, be rendered inoperable, be surrendered to a registered firearm dealer or police department or be transferred to a person in another jurisdiction where such firearms are allowed. It would also require any heirs of a decedent to surrender or transfer the firearm. If registered, the lawful owner would be required to submit fingerprints and pay a fee for registering the firearm.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown hereby takes the following position to oppose the passage of **House Bill 5436** and **Senate Bill 359** in their current forms. The Town Council of the Town of Charlestown supports the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and the Rhode Island Constitution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to every Rhode Island Municipality, State Senators, State Representatives, the Governor, and the Lt. Governor, respectfully requesting their support.

ADOPTED by the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown on this 19th day of May 2025.

Amy Rose Weinreich, CMC
Amy Rose Weinreich, CMC Town Clerk

