



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. McKEE

May 8, 2025

Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr.
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary
Room 313, Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: *2025 – H 5890, An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Weapons*

Dear Chairman Craven:

I write in support of H 5890, An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Weapons (Act). The Act would amend Rhode Island General Laws § 11-47-33, which deals with “possession of firearms by minors,” to criminalize the possession of firearms by persons under the age of eighteen who are not otherwise in the presence of a supervising adult or participating in statutorily sanctioned activities.

Currently, the law permits juvenile firearm possession so long as the weapon is not used. The Act’s removal of the “use” element is a straightforward and common-sense public safety measure. Youth in unsupervised possession of a firearm can have dangerous, irreversible outcomes. Our communities should not have to wait until they are tragically impacted by the “use” of unlawfully possessed firearms before having the ability to take action. Nearly 50,000 lives are lost to gun violence in America each year, and gun safety is a crucial public health issue in Rhode Island and across the country.

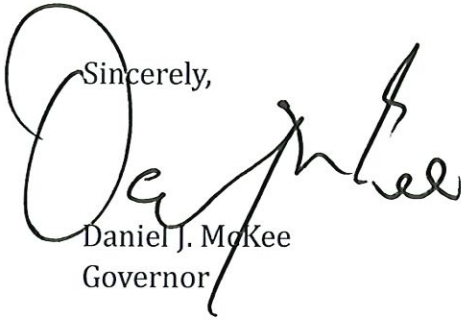
This Act is in line with my Administration’s gun safety and public health priorities. To date, we have enacted a safe storage law, banned high-capacity magazines, raised the age to buy guns to twenty-one, and prohibited the open carry of rifles and shotguns – and we need to do more. This session, I included a ban on assault weapons in the FY26 budget proposal and have called on the General Assembly to pass that legislation and protect Rhode Islanders. In that same vein, I urge you to pass this Act.

Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. McKee", written over the printed name and title.

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
Honorable Jennifer Boylan
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker