

Strong Opposition to 2025 H 5436 Substitute A

House Judiciary Members,

As a resident of Warwick, RI I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 5436 Substitute A, known as the Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025. In most cases for this bill, I have copied and pasted a prior response to the same tired, feel good, rehashed legislation that does not address the actual issues contributing to gun violence. So, the repetitive element is intentional.

The gun itself is an inanimate object and the deadly intent and outcome is always driven by the wielder. Punitive action against law-abiding citizens is not and never will be the answer to curbing gun violence. These new gun control schemes will only harass law-abiding citizens. They will not improve public safety because criminals, by definition, do not obey the law. While I understand the intent to enhance public safety, this legislation raises significant concerns regarding constitutionality and its impact on law-abiding citizens and the potential for legislative overreach.

- **Broad Definitions:** The bill's definitions of "assault weapons" encompasses a wide range of firearms "In common use for lawful purposes", such as self-defense, hunting, and sport shooting.
- **Registration Requirements:** Legislating even voluntary registration and certificates of possession for existing firearms_infringes upon privacy rights while also infringing the second amendment. This is also just a stepping stone to mandatory registration which is illegal and codified in R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-41.
- **Limited Effectiveness:** The RAND Corporation notes that evidence for the effects of assault weapon bans on overall homicides and firearm homicides is inconclusive. Similarly, the evidence for how these bans affect suicide and violent crime is also inconclusive.

- Impact on Responsible Gun Owners: This bill penalizes responsible gun owners who comply with existing laws and use firearms “In common use for lawful purpose” safely and legally.
- The bill’s feature-based restrictions lack any basis in reducing firearm lethality and instead rely on fear-driven misconceptions and gun control propaganda while targeting some of the most common firearm features.
- Threaded Barrels: “Nearly all semi-automatic rifles and shotguns feature threading on barrels, making this a ban on most firearms.
- Shrouds: A shroud that is attached to, or partially or completely encircles, the barrel and that permits the shooter to hold the firearm with the non-trigger hand without being burned”. Are we mandating that law abiding citizens must burn themselves to be in compliance to poor legislation?
- Magazine Location & Buffer Tubes: Most semi-automatic and many bolt-action rifles accept magazines outside the pistol grip. Buffer tubes, critical to AR-15 function, are also targeted, alongside stocks or braces on countless other firearms.
- I also feel that this bill negatively impacts law-abiding firearm owners under the 4th, 5th, and 14th amendments respectively.

I urge you to address these concerns and seek alternative approaches that address gun violence without compromising the rights of responsible citizens.

The supreme court has on multiple occasions used the term “In common use for lawful purpose” to distinguish arms protected by the 2nd

amendment. I ask that you as legislators follow your oaths of office by respecting the rule of law, the constitutions of Rhode Island and our great republic and not allow this defective, discriminatory legislation to be passed into law. Criminals by definition - DO NOT FOLLOW THE LAW

The [United States v. Rahimi](#) decision does not directly attack the concept of firearm use for lawful purposes. Instead, it focuses on the constitutionality of restricting firearm access for individuals who pose a credible threat to others, particularly those subject to [domestic violence restraining orders](#). The Supreme Court affirmed that such restrictions are consistent with the Second Amendment. The decision specifically addressed the Second Amendment rights of individuals subject to domestic violence restraining orders, not the rights of the general public. Unless the entire gun owning population of Rhode Island will be under Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs)...

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Christopher Barker, Lifelong Rhode Island resident