

Roberta DiMezza

From: Don Frye <noreply@not-the-end.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2026 7:42 PM
To: Rep. Lombardi, John J.; Rep. Hull, Raymond A.; Rep. Leonidas Sanchez; Rep. Cherie Cruz; Rep. Jennifer Stewart; House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Constituent Letter Re: RI 2026 Bill H7133 — Domestic Abuse — Firearm Surrender

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Dear Rep. John Lombardi,

As your constituent and a longtime resident of East Greenwich, I am writing to express my strong opposition to RI 2026 H7133, the "Domestic Abuse — Firearm Surrender" bill. While I absolutely support protecting victims of domestic violence, I believe this legislation creates serious procedural problems that could harm both law-abiding gun owners and the very people it intends to protect.

My primary concern is the lack of adequate due process protections in the proposed surrender procedures. Rhode Island residents could be forced to surrender their legally owned firearms based on allegations alone, before having a meaningful opportunity to contest the charges in court. This reverses our fundamental principle of innocent until proven guilty. I've seen how quickly accusations can spiral in family disputes, and stripping someone of their constitutional rights without proper judicial review sets a dangerous precedent that extends far beyond firearm ownership.

Second, the bill fails to address the practical reality of how domestic abusers actually operate. Criminals who truly intend harm will simply ignore surrender orders or obtain weapons through illegal channels. Meanwhile, law-abiding citizens who comply with the law may find themselves defenseless against the very people threatening them. My neighbor went through a bitter divorce two years ago, and the legal process was messy and filled with false claims from both sides. Under this bill, he could have lost his ability to protect himself and his children based on temporary restraining orders that were later dismissed.

The enforcement mechanisms in H7133 also place an unfair burden on local law enforcement. Our police departments are already stretched thin, and requiring officers to track down and collect firearms from respondents diverts resources from investigating actual crimes and protecting victims. The bill provides no additional funding for these expanded duties, which means either other public safety priorities will suffer or the surrender process itself will be inadequately enforced.

Finally, I'm concerned about the bill's impact on legal gun owners who use firearms for legitimate purposes like hunting, sport shooting, or home protection. East Greenwich has many residents who participate in these activities responsibly. The broad language in H7133 could trap innocent people in a bureaucratic maze where getting their property returned becomes nearly impossible, even after charges are dropped or they're found not guilty.

Rather than rushing through legislation that creates new problems, I urge you to work with domestic violence advocates, law enforcement, and legal experts to develop more targeted solutions that actually keep weapons away from dangerous individuals without trampling on the rights of law-abiding Rhode Islanders.

I respectfully ask that you vote no on H7133 and instead support measures that provide real protection for domestic violence victims while preserving constitutional due process rights for all Rhode Island residents.

Thank you for your time and service,
Don Frye