



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

**Testimony in Support of 26-H 7557 & H 8073,
AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -
THE RHODE ISLAND FIREARM INDUSTRY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2026
& AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -
UNLAWFUL SALE OF PROHIBITED FIREARMS**

House Committee on Judiciary

**Hannah Stern - Director, Public Policy and Government Relations
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England**

April 8, 2026

Dear Chair McEntee and honorable members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

In my capacity as the Director, Public Policy and Government Relations at Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE), I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony **in support of House Bills H 7557 and H 8073**. PPSNE provided sexual and reproductive health care to nearly 10,000 Rhode Island patients last year and believes all people should have access to quality, affordable, and compassionate health care as a basic human right — regardless of who you are, where you live, your income, if you have health insurance or your immigration status.

Reproductive freedom encompasses the ability for all people to have control over their bodies, lives, and futures. This includes raising their families in safe and sustainable communities free from violence, including gun violence. These two pieces of legislation seek to place more measures of accountability on the origin of these concerns – the firearm industry – and to limit the number of guns that are in civilian possession in our state as strategies to reduce gun violence.

PPSNE is proud to support common sense gun safety initiatives because the reproductive freedom movement is inextricably linked to the campaign to free communities from violence, a term inclusive of the number of ways that communities and individuals are impacted by the presence of guns in their lives, whether through suicide by firearm; threats of or actual gun violence in communities; school and other mass shootings; and more. Both movements imagine communities where unnecessary societal obstacles do not

adversely impact the safety, welfare, and self-determination of its residents. Yet, since 2020, gun-related fatalities comprise the highest proportion of deaths of minors.¹ And, historically, “Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people experience higher rates of gun homicides overall and fatal shootings by police than their white peers do,”² and “gun homicides perpetrated by intimate partners disproportionately impact women, particularly Black and Indigenous women.”³ The same communities that face disproportionate impact from barriers to reproductive freedom are similarly most harmed by our gun violence epidemic, underlying the necessity of addressing gun violence as a function of true reproductive freedom.

When individuals are fearful of carrying out their daily lives due to concerns about violence, reproductive freedom is impinged upon. In line with PPSNE’s commitment to advocating for policies which comprehensively protect the reproductive freedom of Rhode Islanders, we strongly support H 7557 and H 8073 as measures of addressing the mechanisms by which gun violence has been permitted to proliferate in our communities.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.



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¹ <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2024/guns-remain-leading-cause-of-death-for-children-and-teens>

² <https://everytownresearch.org/issue/impact-of-gun-violence-on-historically-marginalized-communities/>

³ Id.