

March 31, 2026

Dear Chairman McEntee and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Sherri Simmons. I live in Pawtucket and my Representative is Jennifer Stewart. I am writing today in support of H7557, the Rhode Island Firearms and Accountability Act.

I support this bill because it would provide a way to hold gun dealers in RI accountable when they behave in a way that is irresponsible and said behavior causes harm to others. In my capacity as a citizen of this state, I can seek remedy through our legal system from any business whose irresponsible behavior causes me harm. If a local shop owner fails to properly clean ice or falling snow from the entrance to their facility, and I suffer an injury due to their negligence, I can seek remedy through the law. However, currently in the state of RI, remedy cannot be sought from a dealer of firearms for reckless or illegal behavior during the sale of a firearm that then leads to harm or injury of someone else simply because we lack the appropriate law. House Bill 7557 can change that.

PLCCA, the federal law giving immunity to anyone connected to the gun industry, states that "immunity" from responsibility doesn't apply if gun dealers know about a state law and violate it anyway. Since states have the fundamental right to regulate commerce within their borders, the state of RI can pass House Bill 7557 and hold irresponsible gun dealers liable when they violate a state law and that violation causes harm to others. House Bill 7557 does not violate PLCCA. In fact, PLCCA empowers states to set the terms for gun sales. Ten other states have passed similar bills and dealers have clearly not lost business as there are currently an estimated 400-500 million guns in circulation in this country. It is time to pass legislation designed to establish a firearm industry standard of responsible conduct as well as to ensure victims of gun violence may seek remedy if harmed due to a gun dealers' negligence or intentional act of defying RI law. Most gun dealers who follow the law should have nothing to fear.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this important bill. Please vote this bill out of committee and send it to the floor with a recommendation for passage.

Sincerely,

Sherri Simmons
Pawtucket

Cc: Representative Jennifer Stewart
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