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ACLU OF RI POSITION: AMEND

TESTIMONY ON 26-H 7636, RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- SUICIDE PREVENTION— VOLUNTARY FIREARM RESTRICTIONS ACT April 8, 2026

This bill would allow individuals to voluntarily be added to a list restricting their ability to purchase firearms. We believe the process established by the bill is well thought-out and provides appropriate privacy and other protections. However, we do wish to suggest two amendments to the bill, as summarized below.

1. The bill requires individuals seeking to be added to the list to provide a copy of their driver's license or other government-issued ID card. [Page 3, lines 6-7] While we recognize the importance of verifying the identity of individuals requesting to be added to this list, we believe it would undermine the bill's goal if a person was unable to add their name solely because they do not have a government-issued ID card. There remains a not-insignificant percentage of the population without government identification—a problem we have raised in other contexts, such as voter ID—so we would encourage having the bill include an alternative avenue for such individuals.

2. The bill sets important standards for the confidentiality and destruction of these records and for barring their use in other contexts. However, the legislation does not contain any remedies for violations of these provisions. We would therefore urge the inclusion of language that would authorize a private cause of action for violations of those requirements.

Thank you for considering our views.