

Date: April 15, 2026

To: Chairman Craven and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Melissa Ames, Advocacy Chair, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), Rhode Island Chapter

Re: Support for H 7755 – The Responsible Firearm Purchasing Act

Chairman Craven and Honorable Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), I am writing to express our support for **H 7755**, the Responsible Firearm Purchasing Act.

AFSP's mission is to save lives and bring hope to those affected by suicide. In Rhode Island, suicide is a significant public health issue, and firearms remain the most lethal method used in suicide attempts. The "Responsible Firearm Purchasing Act" provides a critical, evidence-based intervention: a mandatory seven-day waiting period for all firearm purchases.

The Period to Saves Lives

By ensuring a seven-day waiting period, H 7755 creates a vital window. This buffer allows an acute crisis to pass, providing essential time for intervention, outreach from loved ones, or for the individual to seek professional support.

Lethality

Firearms are unique in their lethality; while the vast majority of people who survive a suicide attempt do not go on to die by suicide, nearly 90% of those who use a firearm do not get that second chance. By expanding the waiting period to include all firearms, this bill closes a gap that currently allows for the immediate acquisition of highly lethal means during a time of distress.

Safety Training as Prevention

Furthermore, the requirement for updated firearm safety training reinforces a culture of responsible ownership. Ensuring that purchasers are educated on safe storage and the risks associated with firearms in the home is a cornerstone of suicide prevention.

We urge the House Judiciary Committee to pass H 7755 to help us reduce suicide rates in the Ocean State and protect our community members.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the safety of all Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,

Melissa Ames

Advocacy Chair

AFSP Rhode Island Chapter