

Ariana Costa

From: Jonathan Newkirk <noreply@not-the-end.com>
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2026 5:34 PM
To: Rep. Marie Hopkins; Rep. Casimiro, Julie A.; Rep. Casey, Stephen M.; Rep. Thomas Noret; Rep. O'Brien, William W.; Rep. David Place; Rep. Justine Caldwell; Sen. Bridget Valverde; House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Constituent Letter Re: RI 2026 Bill H8070 — Campus Stun Gun & Pepper Spray Self-Defense

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Rep. Justine Caldwell and Sen. Bridget Valverde,

As a constituent and resident of East Greenwich, I am writing to express my strong opposition to RI 2026 H8070, the "Campus Stun Gun & Pepper Spray Self-Defense" bill. I believe that allowing college students and staff to carry stun guns or pepper spray for self-defense would have unintended and far-reaching consequences for our community.

My primary concern is the potential for accidents and misuse. Stun guns and pepper spray can be deadly if not used properly, and I worry that introducing these devices into college environments could lead to devastating incidents. Furthermore, our colleges and universities have existing safety protocols and security measures in place, which have been effective in maintaining a safe learning environment. I see no compelling reason to introduce additional, potentially hazardous elements into these settings.

Additionally, I am concerned about the impact on students with disabilities, who may be disproportionately affected by the presence of these devices. Many students with sensory sensitivities or anxiety disorders may feel uncomfortable or even threatened by the presence of stun guns or pepper spray, which could create a hostile learning environment. As someone who has witnessed firsthand the importance of creating inclusive and supportive communities, I believe that we should prioritize the well-being and safety of all students, rather than introducing measures that could exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

I urge you to vote no on H8070. I appreciate your dedication to serving our community and I thank you for considering my perspective on this matter. With appreciation for your public service, Jonathan Newkirk East Greenwich, RI