

Chairperson McEntee, Representative Messier, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to respectfully oppose House Bill 8071.

This bill would require a background check for virtually every purchase or transfer of ammunition and its components, including common items such as cartridges, primers, and gun powder. While this may appear to be a reasonable safeguard on its surface, in practice it imposes significant burdens on law-abiding citizens while offering little measurable impact on public safety.

Individuals who are prohibited from possessing firearms are already prohibited under existing law from obtaining them. Expanding background check requirements to ammunition does not meaningfully address criminal behavior, as those intent on breaking the law do not rely on lawful retail channels for ammunition. Instead, this bill primarily impacts responsible gun owners who comply with the law.

Ammunition is a consumable item that must be purchased regularly for lawful purposes such as training, competition, and recreational use. Requiring a background check for each purchase transforms a routine activity into a regulated event, creating delays, administrative burdens, and unnecessary friction for lawful citizens.

This bill also extends to private transfers, which raises serious practical concerns. It could criminalize ordinary and harmless conduct, such as sharing ammunition at a range or transferring it between family members. The scope of this requirement is overly broad and difficult to enforce in real-world situations.

This bill imposes significant burdens on law-abiding citizens and sellers while providing no practical means of enforcement. There is no requirement for purchasers to retain proof of a background check, no registry, and no mechanism for law enforcement to verify compliance. The bill also fails to address ammunition already legally owned prior to its passage or purchased out of state, creating confusion and legal uncertainty. As a result, it punishes responsible citizens without effectively preventing unlawful access to ammunition, making it unenforceable in practice.

Additionally, the inclusion of reloading components such as primers and powder places an undue burden on hobbyists and competitive shooters who rely on these materials. These individuals are among the most safety-conscious and law-abiding firearm users, yet they would be disproportionately affected.

Finally, restricting access to ammunition effectively restricts the ability to exercise constitutional rights. A firearm without ammunition is inoperable, and imposing significant barriers to acquiring ammunition places a functional limitation on lawful ownership itself.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to hold H8071 for further study and not advance it to the House floor.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brian C. Murtha

59 Ferris St

Pawtucket, RI 02861

(401) 864-0280