

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 House Bill 8073 *Unlawful Possession of Firearms Act*.

I support this bill because last year's *Unlawful Sale of Prohibited Firearms Act* was incomplete. As a citizen of this state, last year's bill, while welcomed, is confusing. I do not understand why that bill did not ban the **possession** of the selected weapons that were banned for *sale, manufacture and purchase* beginning in June of this year. Ostensibly the restrictions in last year's bill were lawfully instituted because the legislature decided that the named weapons posed a danger to public safety. If the weapons in last year's bill were dangerous enough to *require a ban on the sale, manufacture and purchase* of, does it not follow that they are too dangerous to *possess* as well? House Bill 8073 eliminates this conundrum.

Also, I'd like to point to the irony of the recent arrest of a man named Alexander Bestoso in Newport a few weeks ago. A cache of weapons and accessories, consisting of several illegal items, was photographed and released by police after Mr. Bestoso was arrested. Mr. Bestoso was charged with possession of large capacity feeding devices, possession of other unlawful devices that could be attached to a semiautomatic weapon, and with the manufacturing and purchasing of ghost guns. Mr. Bestoso, however, was not charged with the possession of the most dangerous weapon in his home, an assault style rifle, simply because we lack the legislation to do so. House Bill 8073 would prevent this from happening again.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this very important legislation. We all deserve protection from gun violence. I urge you to vote this bill out of committee and send it to the House Floor with a recommendation of passage.

Sincerely,

Sherri Simmons

Pawtucket

Cc: Representative Jennifer Stewart
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