

**H4319 SB2584
Gun Safety Act**

Presented to Senators and Representatives and Committee members,
Majority Leader Cynthia Creem of Newton, Assistant Majority Leader Joan
Lovely of Salem, Minority Leader Bruce Tarr of Gloucester, Judiciary Committee
Chair Michael Day of Stoneham, Public Safety Committee Chair Carlos
Gonzalez and Judiciary Committee ranking minority member Rep. Joseph
McKenna

March 22, 2024

On behalf of Grandmothers Against Gun Violence – Cape Cod
Donna Wald, President

On behalf of Grandmothers Against Gun Violence, we strongly encourage all our legislators and the Committee appointed to reconcile the firearms bill to work and vote to deliver a robust gun bill that will address new issues and strengthen and expand protections we currently have.

Massachusetts has long been a leader in gun law strength ranking #6 in the nation. MA also ranks as the state lowest in gun deaths other than Hawaii. This state has proven that effective gun safety laws and reasonable regulations save lives. We can reduce gun violence and create a safer environment for everyone with a reasonable and equitable approach. We feel the current climate demands MA to go big on our bill as several suits continue to be brought against our laws and the climate favors stronger gun legislation at this point.

We applaud everyone who has worked so hard and long on this bill recognizing how painstakingly this type of legislation must be undertaken.

We feel it is the time to bring forward a comprehensive gun bill that addresses our current legislation and new legislation. And we must make provisions to visit the challenges we face with new and developing technologies.

We support the following initiatives that have appeared in both bills:

Ghost Guns and 3D Printed Guns - Unregistered, Untraceable, Undetectable

Ghost guns are guns that are fabricated by individuals from parts that are then machined to make a real gun. The parts are not serialized with a number, you do not need a background check to buy the components and they do not exist in any system. They present a challenge to law enforcement, and they are increasingly discovered at crime scenes. Their sales deliver a healthy profit margin which presents an illegal business opportunity.

Assault Weapons Ban

Tightening up the Assault Weapons Ban we have is essential as the manufacturers continue to find creative ways to flaunt the laws. We cannot lose our ban. In 1990, AR -15 production was 1.2% of all guns manufactured in the US; now it is 23.4%. This weapon has no place in civilized society and kills and permanently injures thousands of people a year. Currently we have a legal filing against our Assault Weapons Ban pending in this state.

Extreme Risk Protection Orders (Red Flag Laws)

We have an existing ERPO, but this law expands the profiles of people who can request an ERPO. The expansion includes employers, licensed healthcare providers and school administrators. When we look at most mass shootings, we know that the empowerment of these profiles could have made the difference between life and death for some people. We need to empower the people who see the behavior most often so that they can act on the threat. **We strongly encourage that the provision for school administrators remains in the expansion as most school shootings are committed by “insiders” who the school officials have known sometimes for many years.**

Concealed Carry – New York State Rifle and Pistol Association, Inc., v Bruen

This decision by the Supreme Court made it easier for people to obtain a license to carry a firearm publicly. Although MA addressed the decision immediately, we need to do more to curtail the threat.

Under Bruen states can still impose restrictions on spaces where firearms can be carried and this Act does just that excluding carry from all educational institutions, federal and state government spaces, polling and ballot locations, and other places where there are children and private and commercial property unless owner permission is obtained.

We stand with others who surely would like to see this bill include ALL POLLING PLACES as voting is often carried out in places not considered traditional polling places.

Crime Data Analysis

Using data to understand crime is essential to sound policy making. This bill directs the Criminal Justice Services to analyze and collect data on a wide range of firearm crimes and make that data available to the public.

Commission on Innovative Technology

A commission to investigate innovative technologies such as microstamping and biometric firearms is also part of the proposed bill. Microstamping is a significant development whereby the firing pin imprints a unique number on a shell casing. Biometric gun technology makes a firearm only able to be fired by the owner so that recovered casings can be traced to point of origin thus helping solve gun crimes.

Commission on Community-Based Violence Prevention

This provision establishes a commission of diverse stakeholders to evaluate and assess community violence intervention programs which have been so successful in MA. Community intervention programs work at many levels in an individual's life to prevent involvement in crimes or repetition of criminal behavior. They work to mitigate the obstacles and barriers to people having successful recoveries from crime patterns. This Commission will examine the funding structure of the programs to be sure that strong programs are treated equally and funded appropriately.

Inspections

And certainly not least, Massachusetts State Police will now oversee inspecting gun dealers, strengthening dealer licensing and training standards for dealers. Local police did not have the capacity to inspect gun dealers and inspections have not been done properly for years.

Grandmothers Against Gun Violence MA and Grandparents Uniting for Gun Safety stand behind the provisions outlined in these bills and hope that the finished bill will encompass the best of both bills. With the current national climate regarding firearms, this is no time to be provincial only in our regard for our firearms laws.