



RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT

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Testimony Re: Senate Bill 2224, An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Assault Weapons

Senate Judiciary Committee

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Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. We would also like to thank Senator Miller for sponsoring this important bill and Senators Coyne, Goodwin, Gallo, Euer, Quezada, Cano, Kallman, Felag, and Sosnowski for co-sponsoring. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to voice its support for Senate Bill 2224, which would ban the possession, sale, and transfer of assault weapons.

Nationally and in Rhode Island, gun reform remains a key area of focus, especially in the wake of several tragic school and mass shootings in recent years. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT believes comprehensive state policies to reduce gun violence are overdue. **Senate Bill 2224 is a practical step to reduce gun injuries and increase the safety of children in Rhode Island.**

Gun-Related Emergency Department (ED) Visits, Hospitalizations, and Deaths Among Children and Youth, Rhode Island, 2015-2019

AGE	# OF ED VISITS	# OF HOSPITALIZATIONS	# OF DEATHS
1 to 14	48	4	0
15 to 17	50	10	4
18 to 19	47	17	3
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>7</i>

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, 2015-2019.

In Rhode Island between 2015 and 2019, there were 145 emergency department visits, 31 hospitalizations, and 7 deaths of children and youth due to guns.

As we have seen in recent mass shootings, assault weapons allow a shooter to fire large quantities of bullets in a very short amount of time. Because of the rapid firing, assault weapons allow a shooter to injure and kill large numbers of people very quickly and often do not allow time for police to respond.

We strongly urge you to pass Senate Bill 2224 to ban assault weapons. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

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