



RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT
 ONE UNION STATION
 PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903
 401/351-9400 • 401/351-1758 (FAX)

Testimony Re: Senate Bill 2733, An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Weapons
Senate Judiciary Committee
March 31, 2022
Kelsey Bala, Policy Analyst

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. We would also like to thank Senator Goodwin for sponsoring this important bill and thank Attorney General Neronha for his leadership on this issue. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to voice its support for Senate Bill 2733 which would prohibit the purchase, ownership, carry, transport, or possession of a firearm by a person who has been convicted in Rhode Island or elsewhere of possession of a firearm without a license.

Preventing access to guns is an important measure in preventing firearm-related injuries and death in children and youth. In the U.S. during 2019, 60% (2,023) of the 3,390 firearm deaths of children and youth under age 20 were the result of homicide and 34% (1,167) were the result of suicide. 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.

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
TOTAL	145	31	7

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

Nationally and in Rhode Island, gun reform remains a key area of focus, especially in the wake of tragic school and mass shootings in recent years. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT believes comprehensive state policies to reduce gun violence are needed, including prohibiting individuals convicted of violent crimes, offenses punishable as a felony, and those with prior convictions for possession of a firearm without a license from purchasing or possessing a firearm.

We strongly urge you to pass Senate Bill 2733, which would ensure those who have had prior convictions for possession of a firearm without a license would be prohibited from purchasing or possessing one. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.