

# TOWN OF BURRILLVILLE

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## Burrillville Town Council Resolution No 26-14 Opposition To Rhode Island 2026 Gun Control Legislation

- WHEREAS, the Rhode Island General Assembly continues the unwarranted assault on law-abiding firearm owners with a plethora of gun bills which do nothing to deter or reduce criminal gun violence: H8073/S2710, H8075, H8071, H7755/S2726, H7035/S2295, H7557/S2611, H7636/S2971, H7647, H7754, H8081/S3108, S2314, S2723, S2958, S3038, and S3110; and
- WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville pursuant to Rhode Island statute and the Town of Burrillville Charter, is vested with the authority of administering the affairs of the Town of Burrillville, Rhode Island; and
- WHEREAS, the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified on December 15, 1791 as part of the Bill of Rights, protects the individual right of the people to keep and bear arms; and
- WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S.570 (2008), affirmed an individual's right to possess firearms, unconnected with service in a militia, for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home; and
- WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court in *McDonald v. Chicago*, 561 U.S. 742 (2010), affirmed that the right of an individual to "**keep and bear arms**," as protected under the Second Amendment, is incorporated by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and is applicable to the states; and
- WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court in *United States v. Miller*, 307 U.S. 174 (1939), opined that firearms that are part of ordinary military equipment, or with use that could contribute to the common defense are protected by the Second Amendment; and
- WHEREAS, Article I, Section 22 of the Rhode Island Constitution adopted in 1842, provides that "**The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.**"; and
- WHEREAS, Article I, Section 6 of the Rhode Island Constitution provides that "**The right of the people to be secure in their persons, papers and possessions, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated; and no warrant shall issue, but on complaint in writing, upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation and describing as nearly as many as may be, the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized.**"; and
- WHEREAS, as a matter of general principle, and in recognition of over 230 years of lawmaking under the guidance of the Constitution for the United States of America having properly established numerous laws regarding criminal use of firearms that are wholly adequate when judiciously enforced such that additional laws are unneeded, any law which upon passage renders a life-long law-abiding citizen a felon through no action of their own, is an unjustified law and should be unconstitutional under multiple amendments in the Bill of Rights; and

- WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville to declare its support of the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and to the provisions of the Rhode Island Constitution which protect the citizens of the State of Rhode Island's individual right to keep and bear arms; and
- WHEREAS, the Burrillville Town Council members each took an oath to support and defend the United States Constitution, the Rhode Island Constitution, and the laws of the State of Rhode Island which are not deemed unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, and the Charter of the Town of Burrillville; and
- WHEREAS, the Burrillville Town Council members give great weight to and adhere to the belief of James Madison, Jr., the fourth President of these great United States that: *"Oppressors can tyrannize only when they achieve a standing army, an enslaved press, and a disarmed populace"*; and
- WHEREAS, the Burrillville Town Council acknowledges that individuals who have committed crimes with firearms should be fully prosecuted with existing laws on the books; and
- WHEREAS, bills that have been passed and are being considered by the General Assembly would require the confiscation and storage of otherwise lawfully owned firearms, and make the towns and cities of Rhode Island responsible for these costs; and
- WHEREAS, R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-41. Government firearm registration prohibited specifically says, ***"No government agency of this state or its political subdivisions shall keep or cause to be kept any list or register of privately owned firearms or any list or register of the owners of those firearms; provided, that the provisions of this section shall not apply to firearms which have been used in committing any crime of violence, nor to any person who has been convicted of a crime of violence."***; and
- WHEREAS, Rhode Island firearm purchase requirements already include a background check, a seven-day waiting period, and a "Blue Card" for the purchase of handguns; and additionally, a lengthy process for obtaining a concealed carry permit - all evidence of some of the most restrictive gun purchase/ownership laws in the country; and
- WHEREAS, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Gun Violence Solutions report that ***"Rhode Island had the lowest overall gun death rate and gun suicide rate in the country in 2022 and 5<sup>th</sup> lowest in 2023."*** – which is further evidence of the effectiveness of laws already in existence in Rhode Island; and
- WHEREAS, the limited gun violence that does exist is not from law-abiding citizens who own firearms, but from criminals who pay no attention to any existing or proposed laws, so it naturally follows that any bills restricting the rights of firearm owners will have NO impact on the criminal element responsible for gun violence; and
- WHEREAS, the so-called "assault weapons" targeted in passed/proposed legislation is sweepingly broad and includes many semiautomatic rifles, shotguns, and handguns in common competition and hunting usage - none of which have been part of the so-called "gun problem."; and
- WHEREAS, these bills not only penalize law-abiding citizens from exercising their Constitutional right for owning a firearm, but they also damage federally licensed firearms dealers, who are Rhode Island business owners. They would most certainly restrict their sales and livelihood; and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island General Assembly, in its 2026 legislative session has pending before it bills regulating and restricting the rights afforded the citizens of the State of Rhode Island through the Second Amendment to the United States' Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Rhode Island, most notably including, but not limited to:

**House Bill 8073** and **Senate Bill 2710** which add the word "**possession**" to the already egregious assault on law-abiding firearm owners via the passed **House Bill 5436** and **Senate Bill 359** in the Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025 make a sham of the so-called "compromise" to gain enough votes for passage only a year ago. It would renege on the grandfather provision central to the "compromise of 2025" and prohibit the "**possession**" of "prohibited firearms." Within six (6) months impacted firearms currently legally owned must be surrendered, which to a rational and prudent person seems to violate the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment.

**House Bill 8075** is an equally egregious assault on law-abiding firearm owners and also seems to violate the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment. It requires every firearm owner to maintain a \$1,000,000 liability insurance policy. Failure to maintain coverage results in immediate revocation of all ownership privileges. Existing owners have 30 days from the effective date to obtain coverage.

**House Bill 8071** continues the egregious assault on law-abiding firearm owners and requires a background check before every ammunition purchase in Rhode Island, including reloading components such as primers, powder, and bullets. Sellers who skip the check face fines up to \$500 per sale.

**House Bill 7755** and **Senate Bill 2726** also continue the egregious assault on law-abiding firearm owners and expands Rhode Island mandatory firearm safety training from handguns to all firearms, raises the requirement from 2 hours to 8 hours, adds a written exam, requires renewal every 5 years, and transfers administration to the Office of the Attorney General. It also replaces the automatic 7-day background check window with a required affirmative police clearance and deletes the separate rifle/shotgun purchase application process.

**House Bill 7035** and **Senate Bill 2295** keep the egregious assault on law-abiding firearm owners going by limiting Rhode Island residents from purchasing more than one firearm - pistol, rifle, or shotgun - per 30-day period, in spite of a proven right to purchase a firearm.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville on April 24, 2019, declared itself a Second Amendment Sanctuary Town, now reaffirms that declaration, and hereby takes the following position on state legislation that potentially abridges our Second Amendment rights. We find and declare as fervently and ardently as we can that these gun restriction bills, if enacted by the Rhode Island General Assembly, infringe upon the rights of the People of the Town of Burrillville and the People of the State of Rhode Island to keep and bear arms. We are collectively opposed to the infringement of these rights established by our Founding Fathers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these bills challenge the bounds of constitutionality and impose unfunded mandates upon local governments; and the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville will not appropriate funds for capital construction of building space and/or the purchase of storage systems to store weapons seized, pursuant to any requirements set forth in the legislation if enacted by the General Assembly for the purpose of enforcing any law, that unconstitutionally infringes upon the rights of the People of the Town of Burrillville to keep and bear arms.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to every Rhode Island Municipality, State Senators, State Representatives, the Governor and the Lt. Governor respectfully requesting their support.

Passed as a resolution of the Burrillville Town Council this 13<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026.

ATTEST:  Vieki Martin  
Vieki Martin, Town Clerk

  
Donald A. Fox, President  
Burrillville Town Council