



Everytown for Gun Safety Testimony on HB 459

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We're here to testify in favor of HB 459. This legislation is very simple: it makes sure that state and local authorities are notified when someone who is not allowed to have a gun tries to buy one and fails a background check.

This bill will give law enforcement the tools they need to go after dangerous people before they arm themselves.

Specifically, this bill ensures that the permit issuing authority alerts all relevant law enforcement and prosecuting attorneys on the federal, state, and local levels each time a prohibited person applies for a purchase permit and fails the background check. In Hawaii, a permit is required to purchase a firearm. These permits are issued by the local chief of police.

Last year in Hawaii, 212 people were denied permits. This includes people who were previously convicted of domestic abuse, robbery, sexual assault, and even murder. It's currently a crime in Hawaii to provide false information when applying for a firearm purchase permit.

When dangerous people in Hawaii who are prohibited by law from buying guns – like felons, domestic abusers and people with severe mental illness – lie about their prohibited status and apply for a permit to purchase, that's a red flag, and it's also illegal.

But right now, there is no comprehensive system in place to ensure that when one of these dangerous people tries to get a gun illegally, all appropriate officials are notified, including prosecutors, courts, and probation and parole officers. Our local officials should alert law enforcement that these "denied and dangerous" people are trying to buy a gun and walking free in their community.

That's what HB 459 does.

In addition, if the denied person is under an active restraining order for domestic abuse, the bill ensures that the court that issued the restraining order is notified. And under the bill if the denied person is on probation or parole, the probation or parole officer is notified.

Everytown is working around the country with state legislators and executives from both parties to give law enforcement the tools they need to investigate these potentially dangerous people when they try to buy guns. Enforcing existing gun laws is critical for public safety.

The proposed legislation will enforce Hawaii's current law and give law enforcement more opportunities to stop dangerous people before they can get a gun through other means.

This bill is about enforcing the law – plain and simple. It's exactly what the gun lobby says we should do to stop gun violence – enforce existing laws. We agree that we should enforce existing laws and this is how we are doing something about it.

Please vote yes on HB 459. Thank you for your time today.

LATE TESTIMONY

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
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HB459

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| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Merle Hayward | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

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