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House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

Testimony

HB 1034-FN – 1 Granite Place, Room 159 (10:30 a.m.)

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House Bill 1034-FN – if enacted – will ensnare the law-abiding and so embitter their lives. It will also degrade public safety. Its backers surely know this. It is absurd to posit that one intent on committing murder in a school will be deterred by HB 1034-FN’s penalty, which is that for a “Class A misdemeanor” (up to a year in prison).

If enacted, HB 1034-FN will make more likely in New Hampshire, a mass murder akin to the on-campus murders at Brown University (Providence, RI; 13 December 2025).

No re-wording can redeem HB 1034-FN. It should be voted “inexpedient to legislate”.

Key points:

- (a) Rational persons know penalties can’t deter – and do not deter – a would-be mass murderer
- (b) Putting schools “off limits” to law-abiding persons carrying firearms will ensnare many
- (c) New Hampshire, despite having few laws as to firearms, has long been one of the safest states.

As to (a), in New Hampshire – and likely most other states – a mass murder enables a prosecutor to bring felony charges. New Hampshire’s penalty for murder – life in prison, without possibility of parole (RSA 630:1-a) – is properly severe. So, the penalty set forth in HB 1034-FN – that for a Class A misdemeanor, i.e., a year in prison (per RSA 651:2, II(c))– won’t matter to a person out to commit murder. It is absurd to suggest otherwise.

As to (b), schools’ perimeters are not marked. So, a law-abiding person using a public road can unknowingly enter a “gun-free school zone”. That road may be the only way to get between two points.

If the driver is charged – and wants to clear his/her name – an attorney’s fees and costs will quickly mount-up. This will cost far more than contesting a speeding ticket for exceeding the posted limit by 12 miles/hour! An attorney’s trial preparations will take many hours. An expert’s testimony may be needed to establish the school’s boundaries. Expert witnesses cost thousands. Few can afford – easily or at all – to write several checks, each for thousands of dollars.

My concern about litigation costs is not hypothetical! I spent about \$125,000 to recoup my wrongly-revoked Massachusetts Non-resident, Temporary license to carry firearms. The cost would have been far heavier, had I not done almost all of the law research, delivered pleadings, etc.

This was a civil matter: I breached no law or regulation. The licensor, an attorney, decided I was “unsuitable” to be licensed. Yet, during the litigation, the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms – aware of the litigation – deemed me “suitable” to retail all manner of firearms. After nearly four years of litigation, the license was restored by a unanimous decision and order of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. The court refused to award me my attorney’s fees and costs. Atop that, over nearly four years, I expended thousands of hours of my time.

As to (c), data published by the FBI (Crime Data Explorer) show that from 1985 through 2022, New Hampshire has been among the safest states in New England. The metric: violent crimes per 100,000 residents. Most notable: Massachusetts – with thickets of nasty and repressive laws as to firearms – has long had, at a minimum, nearly twice the amount of violent crime (per 100,000 residents) as has New Hampshire (See attached table). The idea – that “gun control” laws are necessary for public safety to prevail – is error.

HB 1034-FN’s framers simply want to damage as many lawful firearm-owners as possible, especially those, who carry firearms. They are seized of the idea that firearms cause crime: no one can persuade them that view is error. Let there be no doubt as to their agenda. Behind a façade of benevolence, they seek to undermine public safety in New Hampshire!

New Hampshire residents – enamored of “gun control” – should move to Massachusetts. They’ll be happier there. And those of us, content in New Hampshire, won’t have to contend with those, who aim to degrade public safety and who force us to waste time opposing their efforts to undermine public safety.

The bottom line: HB 1034-FN can only damage public safety. It will ensare many law-abiding persons and so embitter their lives. Advocacy for HB 1034-FN bespeaks moral blindness at best and moral perversion at worst.

HB 1034-FN should be voted “inexperient to legislate”.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, for receiving my testimony.

