

My name is Terri McAllister. I am a 49-year-old home maker, mother of 7 and grandmother of 3. I am here to speak in opposition to SB 941, a bill that would require universal background checks and registration of firearm transfers.

Our founders warned us to be skeptical, if not fearful, of over-reaching governments and those who would seek to exercise power in elected office. While the role of legislatures should be to protect and facilitate the Creator-endowed liberties with which we are born, they too often transform into groups drunk with power and determined to transform the world into their own view of utopia through oppressive government control.

It becomes tempting to think that if we just get ENOUGH laws on the books, that we will eliminate evil from the world and make the world a better place. But we all know that laws don't make people good. Laws don't make people moral. Evil comes from the heart and criminal behavior is not the result of too few laws. By definition, a criminal is one who does not take direction from the law. And moral people don't need laws in order to behave without aggression toward others.

When Jesus told us that a man who looks upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart, he was not endorsing the thought police. He was simply pointing out that sin, like crime, begins inside of a person. It is not something that falls upon us due to lack of government restraints.

What this Bill seeks to restrain are behaviors which are not immoral. Is it true that some criminals acquire firearms without registration and without permission of the State Police? Yes. But it is also true that some criminals commit their crimes at night and drink Pepsi before committing crimes, but we don't prohibit being out at night or drinking Pepsi just because criminals do those things. When a law-abiding person engages in a behavior that is sometimes done by criminals, the law-abiding does not become a criminal. It isn't the person doing a behavior that defines the behavior, the behavior stands alone. It is not immoral to acquire a firearm without registration or State Police permission. Therefore, it is over-reaching and tyrannical for a State to punish such behavior.

Since laws cannot make people moral, it is pointless and oppressive to use laws to attempt to curb objectively criminal behavior by outlawing otherwise benign behaviors. This is particularly disturbing when the proposed laws infringe on Creator-endowed rights, such as the right to life, which only truly exists when one has the right to defend that life with any means necessary. When a person is only able to defend his life with the permission of the state, it really isn't a right, it is a privilege.

I believe the Founders were right to mistrust those in government, and this body does little to earn the trust of the People when a Bill can be introduced, heard and then voted upon in the span of only one week. This doesn't sound like the pursuit of good law, obtained through deliberation and consideration of all of the issues and potential consequences of such a law. It sounds much more like an agenda, crafted in secret and thrust upon the legislature in the hopes that it can be rammed through without an opportunity for the opposition to be heard.

In closing, I oppose this Bill because it is unneeded, is burdensome to the law-abiding, will be costly and unenforceable and because it will be incapable of changing the behavior of those with criminal intent. It is a terrible solution to a non-existing problem.

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