

Chairwoman Moller and committee members -

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the committee regarding HF 14. I am writing to testify in opposition of the bill.

Since the Revisor page

(<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/bill.php?b=house&f=HF14&ssn=0&y=2023>) does not list an intended purpose for HF 14 I will assume the purpose is not more nefarious than an attempt to keep firearms out of the hands of those who are currently legally prohibited from possessing firearms. If this is truly the intended purpose of this bill I believe all law abiding gun owners share that goal but I do not believe this bill is not the best option to achieve that goal while still preserving the rights of Minnesota's law abiding citizens for several reasons.

The first reason is that in order to know and confirm that a transfer only took place following a criminal background check law enforcement must first know who currently possesses all of the firearms, i.e. a firearms registry. Only with a registry would law enforcement then be able to know if someone a) possessed a firearm they did not previously own or b) no longer possessed a firearm they previously owned. A firearms registry is of significant concern because they have historically been used by governments to confiscate firearms they no longer wish for citizens to own. This was the case in colonial America, 1930's Germany, 1990's Australia and has been suggested by current politicians in the United States of America.

Another reason for opposing this bill is that many of the firearms crimes that are committed today are committed by criminals who already obtain their firearms through illicit means. If a teenager is currently able to obtain a firearm in order to commit carjacking or other crime I find it difficult to believe that this bill will impede their attempts to obtain a firearm in the future. Criminals find ways to obtain firearms today and they will continue to find ways to obtain firearms in the future. In fact, states that already have laws similar to what this bill proposes, e.g. California, still have a significant problem with criminals obtaining firearms.

While I'm certain there are many other reasons for opposing this bill, the final reason I will testify to is that this bill grossly inhibits many potential law abiding gun owners from exercising their individual Constitutional right of keeping arms. Requiring citizens to go to a "firearms dealer" to complete a transfer when some local governments have driven firearms dealers out of business would require citizens to travel significant distances to complete the transfer. Also, transferring a firearm to an individual that would be used or tried for a couple days would incur a transfer fee at the "firearms dealer" each time which would result in significant cost for exercising a Constitutional right. Adding burdens such as travel and increased cost for other individual rights are not acceptable, why would they be for this individual right?

Thank you for your time and consideration in opposing HF 14.

Benjamin Pratt  
Law Abiding Gun Owner