
WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF KATIE NOVOTNY IN OPPOSITION OF SB86

February 7, 2023

Senate Bill 86, otherwise known as the “Raise the Age Act of 2023, is an insult to young adults. Either someone is an adult when they turn 18, with all the rights and responsibilities that entails, or they are not. We allow them to vote. If they are so irresponsible as to not be able to handle owning a firearm, surely they are not mentally developed enough for something as important as voting either?

We also allow these people to sign up for the military, take on mountains of college debt, get married, buy homes, rent apartments, purchase cars, start businesses, etc. But yet the bill sponsors want to prevent them from participating in shooting sports without a “qualified instructor” or to be able to hunt without supervision AND permission of a parent or legal guardian. If a person is 18, they have no legal guardian, except in certain instances of disability, and there are MANY reasons why a person would not have contact with their parents to grant such permission. Additionally, suppose the parent refuses to grant permission for no reason other than they disagree with hunting? It is ABSURD to make this a requirement in this bill and is a woefully inadequate attempt by the bill sponsors to defend the argument that this bill kills hunting.

Furthermore, the self defense exception is absurd as well. If they cannot possess a long gun, they would already be in violation if they had access to a long gun. So if they followed this proposed law, they would never have access to a long gun to even use for self defense. It is unacceptable to strip 18-21 year olds of their right to self defense and is blatantly unconstitutional. Shotguns in particular, along with other long guns, are incredibly effective tools for self defense that have always been available to all law abiding adults. Stripping this bloc of individuals of their rights simply because some bad actors disobey a litany of laws to commit violent crimes is repulsive.

Bruen established a new standard of review for second amendment laws, striking down the previous method of interest balancing and requiring a text, history, and tradition test. Under this test, this bill will not withstand scrutiny.

We either acknowledge that people aged 18-21 are adults, or we withhold ALL rights and responsibilities that come with adulthood until age 21. This would include requiring parents to

provide shelter, not allowing them to vote, not allowing them to live on their own, not allowing them to join the military, and so on and so forth. These people do not deserve to be stuck in this limbo where they are expected to behave as adults, but yet are not afforded the same opportunities as those 21 and older.

I respectfully request an unfavorable report.

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