

Weekly Legislative Update: **Gun Safety**

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The House Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee has heard heated testimony on five bills we support, listed below. Executive session for all five bills was scheduled for January 27. Action was taken on HB 1240 and HB 1143 in executive session; but not on the other bills.

You can still contact your Representatives [here](#) and let them know you want them to keep gun safety a top priority and that HB 1143, 1144, and 1240 address our most pressing gun safety issues by requiring a permit, including safety training and a waiting period BEFORE a gun dealer releases a weapon to a buyer. Fourteen states have a similar requirement and have found it effective in reducing gun fatalities, including suicides. Though a federal law banning assault weapons is a goal, a state ban will go far until a federal ban is possible. Mass shootings were 70% less frequent when the federal assault weapons ban was in effect.

[HB 1143](#) Concerning requirements for the purchase or transfer of firearms, would require an approved safety training course within five years, fingerprinting, and background check in addition to a 10-day waiting period before a dealer can hand over a firearm. These requirements are similar to those for a concealed weapons permit. Fourteen states have similar requirements and have found that they have reduced fatalities by 14%. The requirements could also interrupt suicide attempts, which are often impulsive decisions. Suicides constitute 75% of gun deaths in Washington. Opponents say the requirements violate Second Amendment protections.

[HB 1144](#) Enhancing requirements for the purchase or transfer of firearms, would require background checks go through the Washington State Patrol rather than local law enforcement agencies.

[HB 1178](#) Concerning local government authority to regulate firearms, would grant local government authority to regulate firearms and where they can be present. This would change the current pre-emption of firearms regulation. Opponents say that the bill would create a patchwork of regulations and gun owners would need to research restrictions in multiple jurisdictions. On the Pro side, different cities and towns have differing conditions regarding use of firearms.

[HB 1195](#) Prohibiting the open carry of certain weapons in public parks and public hospitals.

HB 1240 Establishing firearms-related safety measures to increase public safety, would essentially ban the manufacture, distribution, and purchase of assault-type weapons which have been used in most mass shootings. The weapons specified in the bill are variations of military weapons designed to kill as many persons as possible in the shortest time period. Washington would become the tenth state to ban assault weapons if the bill passes. This is the sixth year a ban on assault weapons has been proposed by the Attorney General.

How You Can Be Involved

- Respond to Action Alerts in the legislative newsletter. These will primarily appear in the section of the newsletter related to Gun Safety
- Contacting Cynthia Stewart, cstewart@lwvwa.org.