



Legislation Summary:

An Act modernizing firearm laws

Initial bill number(s): HD4420 (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsors: Rep. Mike Day

What the bill does, why LWVMA supports it, and the League position relative to this bill.

What the bill does.

Rewrites the laws governing the sale and possession of firearms in the Commonwealth. This 140-page omnibus bill will make firearms laws clearer for gun owners by streamlining and codifying existing licensing practices, combatting the rise in illegal firearms flowing into Massachusetts by providing law enforcement with enhanced tools to target and prosecute firearms trafficking, and protecting our communities from gun violence by standardizing training requirements and clarifying laws relating to carrying firearms outside of the home. It is organized around three sections which are detailed below.

1. Stem Illegal Firearm Flow:

- Provides tools for law enforcement to target illegal gun trafficking by including,
 - an enhanced tracing system to track firearms used in crimes.
 - modernizing the existing firearm registration system and
 - increasing the availability of firearm data for academic and policy use
- Enhances requirements for reporting lost, stolen and surrendered firearms.
- Updates a statewide firearm surrender service to allow individuals not in compliance with gun laws and regulations to surrender illegal firearms anonymously and with immunity from prosecution.
- Transfers inspections and oversight of gun dealers to Massachusetts State Police from local police

2. Protect Communities from Gun Violence:

- Creates specific crimes that will prohibit discharging firearms at or near dwellings carrying firearms while intoxicated.
- Standardizes training requirements for individuals seeking a license to carry.
- Requires live firearm training and a written examination.
- Enhances due process protections for responsible gun owners.

- Allows school administrators, medical professionals, and employers to seek emergency protective orders against gun owners who pose a risk of causing bodily injury to themselves or others.
- Creates a special legislative commission to study and make recommendations to improve the Commonwealth's funding structure for violence prevention services
- Clarifies where individuals may lawfully carry a firearm by explicitly prohibiting the carrying of firearms in schools, polling places, government buildings and into private property without the permission of the owner.

3. Modernize Massachusetts Firearm Laws:

- Ensures that Massachusetts laws remain in compliance with the Bruen SCOTUS decision.
- Streamlines the process of obtaining a license to carry a firearm for responsible individuals
- Clarifies existing assault-style firearms and large capacity prohibitions.
- Closes loopholes that allow the modification of legal firearms into illegal automatic weapons
- Requires the registration and serialization of receivers and barrels, two parts necessary in the manufacturing of guns. Criminalizes building and selling the untraceable guns.
- Removes semi-automatic rifles or shotguns from the newly created long-gun permit for 18- to 21-year-olds
- Increases penalties for failing to report a lost or stolen guns.

Why LWVMA Supports This Bill.

This bill takes a comprehensive approach that will combat the rise in illegal firearms flowing into MA, provides law enforcement with enhanced tools to target and prosecute firearms trafficking, and protects our communities from gun violence by tightening laws relating to carrying firearms outside the home.

League Position Relative to this Bill.

Gun Policy, LWVUS *Impact on Issues*, pp. 153-154

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the proliferation of semi-automatic/automatic weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.

The League supports licensing procedures for gun ownership by private citizens to include a waiting period for background checks, personal identity verification, gun safety education, and

annual license renewal. The license fee should be adequate to bear the cost of education and verification.

The League supports strong limitations on access to semi-automatic/automatic weapons, enforcement of strict penalties for the improper possession of and crimes committed with handguns and assault weapons, and allocation of resources to better regulate and monitor gun dealers.

LWVMA *Where We Stand*, p. 48

Handgun control

Goal: Elimination of the private possession of handguns (1974) and assault weapons (1989).

The League supports:

- limitation of the sale and possession of handguns and assault weapons to law enforcement and military personnel
- a possible exception for sportsmen if the guns are used and stored away from the home under controlled conditions

Until such a time as a ban on the private possession of handguns and assault weapons becomes law the League supports:

- improved and standardized licensing procedures
- training in the use of handguns and assault weapons and the responsibilities of ownership
- education of the public to the dangers of the handgun in the home
- strict enforcement of the present laws concerning handgun ownership
- measures to encourage the removal of all handguns and assault weapons from the home and street