

Testimony in Opposition to H.B. 2543

Relating to the prohibition of transfers of firearms if the Department of State Police is unable to determine if the recipient is qualified to receive a firearm

I am opposed to H.B 2543 as drafted. This bill attempts to solve one problem by creating another problem.

The existing next day rule does need revision. However, not providing a definite period in which the Department of State Police must respond to a background check request is unworkable. Qualified individuals wishing to purchase a firearm could be denied merely by inaction on the part of the Department of State Police, or if a request that was not immediately approved got “lost” or “misplaced” in the system. Additionally, unless the Department of State Police were to specifically assign staff to follow up on delayed approvals, what incentive is there for a staff person at the Department of State Police to try to follow up on delayed approvals? The approval staff is stretched thin as it is, and telephone wait times can be very long even now.

I recommend that a defined period, such as 10 calendar days, be used to provide a definite date after which a gun dealer or private party can legally transfer a firearm to a purchaser without a unique approval number.

Thank you for considering my testimony.