

**INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



**NRA**

March 22, 2023

House Judiciary Committee  
124 N Capitol Ave, Room 521  
Lansing, MI 48933

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the members of the National Rifle Association in Michigan, I am writing to urge you to oppose Senate Bills 76-78 and House Bills 4138, 4142 and 4143. This legislation is not about public safety. HB 4138 attacks law-abiding gun owners by placing further burdens on gun ownership and creating roadblocks to purchase firearms. The proposed law would expand the current permit to purchase handgun system to include all rifles and shotguns. This will ultimately lead to the registration of all rifles and shotguns in the state.

This bill bans the private sale or transfer of rifles and shotguns between any two parties -- including immediate or extended family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, hunters, competitive shooters and gun club members. Traditional, innocent conduct becomes a criminal offense.

The bill would make it a crime, with very limited exceptions, to simply hand a firearm to another person. Any time gun owners carry out this simple act, they would potentially be exposing themselves to criminal penalties. The exceptions are narrowly tailored and create many traps for unwary gun owners. The only exception in the bill for loaning a firearm to another individual are if:

- the individual is at a recognized target range or shooting facility
- the individual is using the firearm for the purpose of target shooting or instruction and
- the owner of the firearm is physically present and supervising the use of the firearm.

Here are a few examples of how these narrow exceptions will make criminals out of law abiding citizens:

1. Under this bill package, you could not let your friend try out your new shotgun while duck hunting sitting in a blind 100 yards apart in the field.
2. If your uncle travels from out of state to deer hunt on your property, you could not lend him a rifle to sit in a tree stand by himself.
3. If your sister is home alone with her kids for a weekend and worried about crime in her city, you would be prohibited from loaning her a shotgun for self-defense.

4. If you have a family member in crisis and they want to temporarily relinquish their firearms to you to safely store while they work through their personal issues, this bill prohibits it.

Another puzzling piece of this bill is that it removes existing exception for the purchase of pistols from federally licensed dealers without first obtaining a purchase permit. That means in order to buy a pistol from a licensed dealer, you must first apply for and pay for a permit to purchase from your local law enforcement office (which may take a number of days to process), and then head to your local gun store where you will undergo a second background check for the purchase of a pistol. So we're creating a double background check system for the purchase of pistols, which is redundant, creates an unnecessary cost and is simply a roadblock to legal gun ownership.

I mentioned earlier that this bill was not about public safety. Rifles and shotguns (which this bill claims to target) are used in a very small percentage of crimes in Michigan. According to FBI's 2021 data, rifles and shotguns were used in about 1% of all violent crimes. For homicides, that number was 3%. To put this in perspective, knives and other cutting implements were used in about 6% of homicides; about double the amount of homicides with rifles.

Lastly, background check requirements do not stop criminals from obtaining firearms. Federal studies have repeatedly found that persons imprisoned for firearm crimes get their firearms through theft, the black market, or family members or friends. This bill intentionally ignores that reality and seeks to create new barriers to entry for those who wish to protect themselves and their families.

Once again, I respectfully request you vote no on these bill packages.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Jones  
Michigan State Director  
NRA Institute for Legislative Action