

Legislation Text

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Calling on the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to pass House Bills 338, 714, 731, and 1018 which address reasonable firearms restrictions that will enhance the safety of all Pennsylvanians and Philadelphians.

WHEREAS, On April 26, 2023, The Pennsylvania House of Representatives met to consider four pieces of legislation, House Bills 228, 714, 731, and 1018. These commonsense reforms will allow the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia to implement measures to keep our citizens safe; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 338 introduced by Representatives Ben Sanchez and Malcolm Kenyatta, enacts reporting requirements for individuals whose firearms have been lost or stolen. This legislation allows for further tracking of firearms that could possibly end up in the wrong hands. This legislation can go a long way in combatting straw purchases and other methods that sustain the illegal transfer of firearms. Philadelphia has a version of this law that is being heavily litigated in the court system, and allowing for its implementation will be an effective tool to enhance public safety; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 714 introduced by Representative Perry Warren enhances background checks in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Currently, the Commonwealth requires background checks on all handgun purchases, but they are not required to purchase other firearms like rifles or through sales that are private and at gun shows. This bill will close the “gun show loophole” and enact background check requirements for firearms regardless of barrel length. Comprehensive background checks are proven methods that save lives, and they should be implemented across all firearm purchases in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 731 introduced by Representative Darisha Parker requires that when an individual purchases a rifle, they will also receive a locking mechanism to ensure safe storage. This is currently the law for handgun purchases, but this legislation would expand that to include a wider range of firearms. 1.7 million children live in a home with an unsecured firearm and many end up injured as a result. This legislation will also enhance safety because a secure firearm is less likely to be stolen or trafficked; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 1018 introduced by Representative Jennifer O’Mara establishes a system for extreme risk protection orders. This legislation provides a mechanism for loved ones, family members, or law enforcement to ask a judge to step in a temporarily remove a firearm from someone who is a danger to themselves. This legislation will make great strides in suicide prevention and assist those in crisis. In 2019, City Council passed the “Philadelphia Gun Violence Protection Plan” that has similar provisions that will allow the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania to temporarily seize firearms from those who are a danger to themselves or others; and

WHEREAS, This legislation, if enacted by the General Assembly will go along way to improving public safety in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The Council of the City of Philadelphia thanks the General Assembly for their work to implement reasonable firearm restrictions, urges the passage of this legislation by the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and urges Governor Shapiro to sign this legislation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby calls on the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to Pass House Bills 338, 714, 731, and 1018 which address reasonable firearms restrictions that will enhance the safety of all Pennsylvanians and Philadelphians.