

Good morning members of the Committee on Federal and State Affairs,

My name is Zachary Mallory, and I am writing in opposition to HCR5020, the resolution that would recognize the “Right to Bear Arms” as a fundamental right in Kansas.

I write in opposition on behalf of myself, and other gun violence survivors across the State of Kansas who have either experienced gun violence personally or know someone who has or has had a loved one’s life taken by senseless acts of gun violence.

I wanted to address the fact that I am in full support of the Second Amendment and the Right to Bear Arms, however, I am also pro-gun safety. This bill does not represent your constituents, as it represents your personal opinions. Gun violence leaves rippling effects on communities and families that are often left with unanswered questions as to why gun violence continues to ripple its way through communities.

I became a survivor at the young age of 16 years old. My perpetrator bought a ghost gun off the internet. Ghost guns are guns assembled by the purchaser, do not require a background check, and do not even have a serial number to be traced. I was left for dead. Beaten senselessly all because I was gay. I went through years of therapy, medications, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and was diagnosed with C-PTSD as a direct result of gun violence, specifically.

We have a public health crisis in our state. Gun violence happens in all cities, counties, and communities across the State of Kansas. We do not have Red Flag laws, we do not require background checks, and we continue to have people dying at the hands of senseless gun violence. Oftentimes, survivors are silenced, re-victimized, or not believed because “It’s not the guns that kill people, it’s people that kill people” Correct, and without background checks, or red flag laws, this will continue to happen.

I urge each of you to vote in opposition to this resolution and come up with resolutions to end gun violence in our communities. Red Flag laws, and background checks on all gun sales are perfect places to start.

Thank you—

Zachary Mallory, Lenexa, Kansas, Survivor of Gun Violence.