



Legislative Action

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It took over seven hours, but at 8:50 p.m. the House State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee defeated the fifth of five bills to weaken gun laws.

Despite Colorado's awful incidents of gun violence from Columbine to the Aurora Theater, the gun lobby and gun rights advocates continue to labor to loosen Colorado's Gun Laws. Rebuffed were a repeal of the 2013 high capacity magazine ban and an effort to remove the necessity for permits to carry concealed weapons.

An overcapacity crowd of citizens came to speak against the bills. They were particularly energized against the concept of allowing guns in K-12 schools and outnumbered those supporting the bill by 30 to 11. Tom Mauser, who lost his son Daniel at Columbine, refuted the oft-sung refrain of the gun lobby that mass shooters deliberately select gun-free zones. Rather, Mauser said "the Columbine shooters chose Columbine because it was their school."

Bill opponents comprised a broad spectrum of citizenry: gun violence survivors, children and youth, teachers, veterans, parents and representatives of groups such as Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police, Colorado Ceasefire, Colorado Ceasefire Millennials, Colorado Faith Communities United Against Gun Violence (CFCU), Generation Progress, Hunters Against Gun Violence, the League of Women Voters, Moms Demand Action and Safe Campus Colorado.

A Make My Day (Stand Your Ground) proposal to give criminal and civil immunity for the use of deadly force in a business location was defeated for the eleventh straight year.

Rep. Perry Buck (R-Berthoud) threw a wrench into the works by immediately proposing a strike-through amendment to her bill for Permitless Concealed Carry for the Military. Her amendment would have amended the concealed carry (CCW) law to allow active military as young as 18 to obtain CCW permits. The committee was not receptive and defeated both the amendment and the original bill.

Most alarming statement of the day was given by Sheriff Chad Day of Yuma County: "The second amendment is not about personal protection, it's about protection against our own government. The number of rounds, if necessary to do that if the time ever comes, should not be limited to 15 rounds, shouldn't be limited at all. The second amendment requires us to be able to protect ourselves from ourselves."

In a press conference prior to the hearing, Eileen McCarron of Colorado Ceasefire noted that the media has a penchant for calling bills such as these “zombie bills.” She said “We stand on the front line against the Zombie Apocalypse, where the globe suffers an infestation of bills such as these.”

In that same press event, Alana Smart of CFCU asked “Does anyone think that any of these five bills will do anything to reduce gun deaths and make us safer?”

Thankfully, enough committee members didn’t think so. We are grateful to those legislators who upheld public safety by defeating each of these proposals.

Colorado Ceasefire, an all-volunteer statewide organization, has been fighting for freedom from gun violence since 2000. Ceasefire initiated and was instrumental in the enactment of the 2013 Colorado firearms laws, which included universal background checks, a high capacity magazine ban, and domestic violence firearms relinquishment.

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