



February 25, 2018

FLOOR ALERT

RE: [SB 6620 \(Froctt\)](#)
Banning purchase of firearms for 18-21 year old citizens; Continued implementation of DOL pistol registry; School Safety “Alert” Farce

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

Senators, Representatives, and Staff:

On behalf of the members and supporters of the Firearms Policy Coalition, I respectfully submit our opposition to Senate Bill 6620 (SB 6620).

SB 6620’s Quiet Omission: The Scandal-Ridden DOL

While SB 6620 is a slight departure from SB 5444 ([see FPC Floor Alert; Feb. 1, 2018](#)), the state’s DOL pistol purchase registry remains. Needless to say, it is mostly duplicitous, since the approximately 600,000 Washington State Concealed Pistol License holders have already registered their name, information, and fingerprints with the state.

Everything short of these individuals’ favorite color is in the CPL and state DOL Pistol databases respectively. The duplicitous nature of this is overkill and a waste of government resources; and oddly, a bizarrely strange and anti-privacy fetish that anti-Individual Rights legislators seem hell-bent on clinging to – no matter how fruitless and impractical may be.

Instead, this body should consider eliminating this DOL pistol purchase registry completely and replacing it with a lost and stolen firearms list. The usefulness to citizens and law enforcement alike would be better than having this current useless boondoggle – which currently serves no discernible above-the-board purpose, other than to waste money, harass legal firearms owners, and instill distrust of the government.



Like many bills this session, SB 6620 is positioned to eliminate this useless and dangerous violation of privacy. The status quo is unacceptable.

Furthermore, the refusal to take up the Amendment 545 to SB 6006 repealing the Governor’s “Emergency Gun Ban Powers” ([See FPC Floor Alert Dated 2-10-18](#)) does not add up – even though federal courts have consistently struck down these unconstitutional laws – and – it conflicts with federal law on the issue.¹

If this body sees fit to bend the rules to pass this law; it should also do so in order to repeal this egregious and dangerous law by amending and passing SB 6006. To do any less is simply absurd and hypocritical.

“All Animals Are Equal, But Some Animals Are More Equal Than Others” Banning 18-21 Year Olds

The absurdity of banning 18-21 year olds from purchasing a firearm while they are still deemed mature enough to vote, drive a car, receive abortions, enter into contracts, and serve in the military (using guns) is an idea based in blame on the person’s age—and the misused object of crime—not the actual person that committed any acts.

The inability and sometimes flat-out refusal of our state and national legislative institutions to adequately implement a system of sensible public (and school) safety, education, mental health resources and facilities, and criminal justice, is not the fault of an entire age group.

What other constitutional right could be limited and segmented among free and legal adults over 18? The right to vote? Free speech? Protest? Assembly? Due Process? Speedy Trials? Worship? Equal protection? Privacy? Marriage? Movement? The answer of course, is none. And any type of proposed ban can and should be quickly rejected.

“Extreme Risk Protection Orders”

The same backers of SB 6620 have also presumably supported Initiative 1491, so called “Extreme Risk Protection Orders” (ERPO); as it was marketed to the voting public as a law that the community and law enforcement could use against possibly unstable and violent individuals when no other immediate recourse was available.

Now, instead of focusing on mentally disturbed or criminally violent individuals, the backers of SB 6620 have instead drawn their Machiavellian blame game to those that have

¹ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/5207>



committed no crime, can pass a state and federal background check, have no restraining or protective orders, and have not been adjudicated mentally ill or involuntarily committed.

Perhaps this is because the same members of this body continually refuse to address obvious and (and even legally verified) shortcomings in public safety, school safety, mental health, and criminal justice.

The “flaw” in the ERPO is of course, the refusal of this body to adequately treat mental health and the above mentioned societal issues and obligations seriously, which presumably leaves the individuals in question free to roam our streets.

Instead, like SB 5444, SB 6620 scapegoats an entire age-group – of which, is primarily tasked with keeping the country safe – however would not be trusted enough by the State of Washington to defend themselves against the same disturbed individuals the government chooses to let roam free to assault or kill.

SB 6620’s “School Safety Alert” Farce

Last but not least, some members of this legislative body have deemed it appropriate to add to this bill a system to “alert” certain individuals and law enforcement to possible threats.

We are already supposed to have a local threat reporting system; it is called 911.

How this “system” differs from the current law without mandating the person be detained and questioned, or evaluated by a mental health professional, isn’t exactly clear. What is clear is the backers of SB 6620 desire to “do something” and continue the Machiavellian blame game against everyone but the actual criminal actors—and those within our government that fail to act.

What that “something” is, and what the end results are not precisely apparent. If 911 operators, law enforcement, and school administrators are not already taking warnings about threats seriously, then perhaps they should be retrained—or fired if they cannot handle the responsibility.

The “Gun Free” Zone: A Noble Lie

The statistics bear out that school violence and shootings in schools are actually trending downward since the early 1990’s.²

² <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2018/03/there-is-no-epidemic-of-mass-school-shootings.html>



Even so, the crimson thread in attacks on innocent children, teachers, and others at school campuses of all ages is not the methodology or motive of the killers, but an irrational reliance on the ethereal fiction of “gun-free zones” rather than truly effective physical security measures.³

America’s legislative buildings, courthouses, airports, and government offices are protected by robust, layered physical security measures: physical barriers, secured perimeters, controlled ingress, weapon detection devices—backstopped, just in case, by law-abiding people with firearms.

Too many schools have little or no real ability at all to deter, repel, or quickly stop a violent attacker before people are hurt and innocent lives are lost. Are our children and teachers less worthy of effective security measures than our legislators, judges, and government agency workers? We think not.

However, until our local, state, and national governments enact laws that actually protect our children and teachers with real physical security barriers, controlled access to school grounds, and enable those with the ability of armed response to do so on every campus, our children and the people entrusted to care for them at places of learning will remain at risk.

In a twist of irony, we pay college tuition for our highly trained military veterans to become teachers, administrators, and staff; only to have them be completely disarmed when they enter their new career. As with 18-21 year olds, this body would apparently trust them to go to war and kill the enemies of the United States with firearms and far more complex and destructive weaponry; however, not to protect children and staff in schools with a concealed pistol.

Thousands of existing federal, state, and local criminal laws serve to proscribe and punish acts of murder, assault, illegal use of weapons, and many other conduct that harms innocent people. Truly evil and mentally ill people will always ignore these laws, just as they also ignore “gun-free” zones, in pursuing their acts of depravity.

The other real and practical answer is to keep evil and mentally unstable people off of our streets and out of our schools in the first place and have sufficient means of quickly ending the threat posed by an attacker who would use force to enter these areas and harm innocent Americans.

Whatever “conversation” our state, or our country may wish to have about the evils found in human nature, and whatever questions we as a society might have about how to better address those moral and cultural deficiencies, no legitimate answers will be found in additional emotion-driven laws that undermine our American system of ordered liberty and the pre-existing right to keep and bear arms.

³ <https://crimeresearch.org/tag/gun-free-zones/>



For the reasons above we OPPOSE SB 6620 and encourage this body to adopt a more sensible and well-balanced measure – as we've outlined in this correspondence.

If you have any questions or require assistance I am available to be reached at PJW@FPCHQ.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Philip Watson'.

Philip Watson
Legislative Advocate
Firearms Policy Coalition