

PHILIP B. SCOTT
GOVERNOR



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

May 28, 2024

The Honorable John Bloomer
Secretary of the Senate
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Secretary Bloomer:

Today I'm allowing S.209, *An act relating to prohibiting unserialized firearms and unserialized firearms frames and receivers*, to become law without my signature.

As a public safety measure, I agree firearms should be serialized, which is why I'm allowing this bill to become law despite some concerns about its practicality and impact.

Over the last decade, as anti-policing policies increased and criminal accountability has steadily decreased, violent crime has grown in Vermont. This is why I believe we should instead focus on measures that will reverse these trends over those, like S.209, that are unlikely to have any measurable impact on violent crime.

In addition to my concerns about this bill's effectiveness, I would have preferred the Legislature not criminalize mere possession when there is no evidence of criminal intent. I also strongly believe the Legislature should reinstate the gun show exemption to the 3-day waiting period, which was supported by the Senate this session, and I hope the Legislature will revisit this next session. The 3-day waiting period was enacted to prevent individuals from impulsively purchasing a weapon to take their own life, and the evidence does not support that these types of purchases would happen at a gun show.

I appreciate, however, that legislators found some middle ground and removed the 3-day waiting period for a firearm owner seeking to have a firearm serialized. The waiting period, which like gun shows, made no sense in this context and would have deterred compliance.

Again, while my concerns on the practical impacts and enforceability keep me from signing this bill, I'm allowing it to go into law because I understand the fears behind access to untraceable firearms and respect the effort to tailor the scope and exceptions to limit impact for law abiding citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip B. Scott".

Philip B. Scott
Governor

PBS/kp