

PHILIP B. SCOTT
GOVERNOR



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

June 1, 2023

Vermont General Assembly
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Re: H.230, AN ACT RELATING TO IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS TO REDUCE
SUICIDE AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

Dear Legislators:

Today I'm allowing H.230, *An act relating to implementing mechanisms to reduce suicide and community violence*, to become law without my signature.

This bill has come a long way. It started as something I could not support, but after a lot of time and effort from various parties, it ended in a better place, where I support two out of the three major provisions.

First, I believe the expansion of who can petition the court for an extreme risk protection order will prove to be helpful in keeping guns out of the hands of those who are at risk of doing harm to themselves or others.

Second, the provision relating to 'safe storage' creates a more palatable and effective approach to ensure guns are not readily accessible to those who shouldn't have them.

Unfortunately, the third component, including the 72-hour waiting period is, in my opinion, problematic.

Given the relatively new legal landscape we find ourselves in following recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, I have significant concerns about the provision's constitutionality. My struggle with the overall bill lies in the fact that I, and all legislators, took an oath to "not do any act or thing injurious to the constitution."

However, this matter is currently being taken up through constitutional legal tests across the country and will be decided in Federal Court. I would also not be surprised to see a Vermont entity challenge the constitutionality of this provision of the bill, as well.

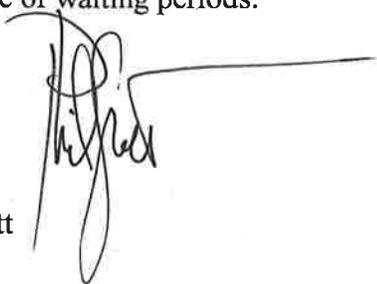
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With this in mind, knowing that my constitutional concerns will be addressed through the legal process, I will allow H.230 to become law without my signature, and await the judicial branch to decide the fate of waiting periods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip B. Scott", with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Philip B. Scott
Governor

PBS/kp