



The League of Women Voters of Delaware Urges Release of HB 330

presented at a hearing of the House Administration Committee on March 14, 2018

Although we would prefer a total ban on automatic firearms, the League of Women Voters believes that HB 330 is urgently needed to protect our citizens' safety *and* health from both the physical and the emotional damage that gun violence threatens.

Military-grade weapons have no place in civilian life and are unnecessary for self-defense. Popular among mass shooters, assault weapons pose a distinct threat to the safety and security of the American people, making it easier for deranged attackers to kill more people more quickly.

Valentines Day 2018. Parkland Florida. 17 murdered, 14 injured. Hundreds, in fact, an entire community, traumatized. All that perpetrated by a troubled 19-year-old former student with an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle he purchased legally.

"I keep having flashbacks," Samara Deitsch, age 15, has said. "There's times I want to cry and can't. There's times I want to have fun and am hysterical..."

"This is the reality that confronts the 3,000 students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School when the cameras turn off and the day's rallies are over. They have won praise for their strength and eloquence on the world's stage. But even as they raise millions of dollars and plan nationwide rallies, parse the details of assault-weapon laws and spar with politicians and conservative critics, the young survivors of the massacre are struggling with the loss of their friends and educators, and the nightmares that flood back in moments of stillness."¹

Children should not have to deal with this kind of trauma.

Troubled young men should not be able to buy a semi-automatic firearm when they are too young to buy a pistol. That's why the League of Women Voters supports HB 330.

Those who claim we want to ignore or violate the Second Amendment to our nation's Constitution are wrong.

In delivering the majority opinion in *District of Columbia et al v. Heller* in 2008, it was Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia who wrote on the Second Amendment not being an unlimited right:

"Like most rights, the Second Amendment right is not unlimited. It is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose: For example, concealed weapons prohibitions have been upheld under the Amendment or state analogues. The Court's opinion should not be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms."²

The League of Women Voters of Delaware urges the House Administration Committee to release HB 330 and to work for its speedy enactment.

¹ Jack Healy, *Outspoken and Precocious, Florida Students Struggle with Loss When the Cameras Turn Off*, New York Times, February 25, 2018.

² Scalia, Antonin (June 26, 2008). "[District of Columbia et al. v. Heller, Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, No. 07-290. Argued March 18, 2008](#)"