

Testimony in Support of SB24-107

Thank you, Chair and Committee

My name is Robert Edmiston. I am with the Firearms Coalition of Colorado, an NRA- affiliated, all-volunteer, grassroots organization dedicated to the protection of individual rights and public safety. I am a former U.S. Army officer and vocational rehabilitation counselor. I have a master's degree in psychology, counseling, and guidance.

I am writing in support of the measure under consideration. The manufacture, distribution, and sales of illegal drugs are indeed a "public health epidemic." Far from being victimless crimes, drug trade-related offenses ruin lives, shorten lives, and cause needless deaths through overdoses and criminal behavior driven by the need to obtain the next "fix."

The fact that criminals in the drug trade often use firearms to protect their products and profits from other criminals and law enforcement leads us to the conclusion that such persons should be among those legally denied the use of firearms. We are not under the illusion that many of these criminals will be deterred by the increased penalty, but to the degree that the bill will keep offenders off the street or under the supervision of parole or probation officials, it has merit.

We believe that the best predictor of future criminal behavior is past behavior. We believe that criminal behavior tends to escalate over time, leading to the conclusion that today's joy rider may become tomorrow's carjacker, in the absence of intervention from the criminal justice system. To the degree that law breakers are deterred by increased penalties, we are inclined to favor early intervention in the potential "cycle of violence."

In addition, plea bargains are often struck to lessen penalties for much more serious crimes. A person who pleads to second-degree motor vehicle theft may have committed much worse offenses and has chosen to accept a deal.

We believe that the significant penalties in the motor vehicle statute, CRS 18-4-409, lie in the second-degree criteria. Joy riding is a third-degree offense. Damage to a vehicle of over \$1,000, use of the vehicle in another crime that is not auto related, altering the vehicle to escape detection, taking the vehicle out of state, or bodily injury to another person will place the offender into the second-degree level. These factors all require criminal intent beyond the "bad decision" to take someone else's car. We believe these aggravating factors are serious enough to warrant the additional penalty.

Another factor in favor of increased penalties for auto theft, especially in the case of damage or other aggravating elements, is the often-overlooked catastrophic effect of losing a vehicle on individuals or families who depend on vehicles for work, medical appointments, school functions or other necessary activities. The more economically disadvantaged the victim(s), the more drastic the consequences of losing a vehicle.

We urge an "Aye" vote by members of the committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Senate Judiciary

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SB24-107 Weapons Possession Previous Offender Add Crimes

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Pat Rottschaefter For themselves	Dear Judiciary Committee, My name is Pat Rottschaefter. I live in Littleton, Co. I have a request with regard to SB24-107. While I am a member of Moms Demand Action my words are my own. Under current law it is illegal for a person to possess a firearm if they have been found guilty of committing a variety of crimes. This bill would add to that list. This expanded list includes very serious violent crimes as well as many drug crimes (which leads to all sorts of societal ills). I urge the committee to vote yes on this bill to protect our society.
Mark Kaiser For themselves	Too often I have seen a criminal arrested for multiple crimes, and then the weapons charge is dropped. Criminals need to be held accountable for each and every offense instead of not being held responsible for each offense.