

Senate Health & Human Services  
 02/07/2024 Upon Adjournment  
 SB24-057 Agricultural Workforce & Suicide Prevention  
 Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Dianna Monk Against herself	<p>REFERENCE TO BILL SB24-057</p> <p>Madam chair and Committee Members, thank you for hearing my testimony. My name is Dianna Monk and I am representing myself. I strongly oppose SB24-057.</p> <p>I have lived in this rural area all of my life. I was raised on a dairy farm with a family of seven. In my adult life, my husband and I have raised four sons on our farm. We all worked together and raised irrigated corn, sugar beets, wheat, and cattle. We've owned and still operate our farm for fifty years now and I still live on our home place.</p> <p>First of all, just because there is a gun in the home doesn't mean it is for committing suicide. If one is inclined to commit suicide, they will find another method. Our constitution states the right to bear arms for our protection.</p> <p>There are already Counseling Hot Lines available. I feel that the statics that are being used here need to be reviewed for accuracy, and that the statics of deaths in our community have been labeled due to covid more than anything else and that it would be a matter of opinion to separate out the reason posted for a cause of death.</p> <p>I feel that this bill is targeting the agricultural community to get underlying access to further legislation that would hinder the management of our own industry. Stating that the state reviews it every other year is open to government control. How many of the members on the agricultural committee live in a rural area to actually experience the professional services that we have available in the rural areas.</p> <p>As for the accessibility to medical care: in most areas, there is a hospital within 30 minutes of most homes. How long does it take a citizen in Denver to get to a hospital? We have ambulances that can come to residents if you can't get to a hospital, and flight for life access to get direct access to specialized care on the front range. It's just as close to us as it is to the majority of citizens in the municipal community.</p> <p>I think this bill is a waste of energy and time and that this energy and time could be spent on more urgent agenda. Overall, I urge a no vote on this bill.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
Robert Edmiston Against The Firearms Coalition of Colorado	<p>Testimony in opposition to: SB24-057</p> <p>Thank you, Chair and Committee.</p> <p>My name is Robert Edmiston. I am with the Firearms Coalition of Colorado, an NRA-affiliated, all-volunteer organization dedicated to</p>

	<p>individual rights and public safety. I am a former U.S. Army officer and vocational counselor. I have a master’s degree in psychology, counseling and guidance.</p> <p>While we applaud the efforts of the sponsors, we believe the focus of the bill on gun possession is misplaced. We would rather see attempts to address reasons why an individual becomes a suicide risk. Promoting worker competency and self-esteem will be of greater value than a focus on one possible means of suicide.</p> <p>Suggestions include a poster campaign urging agricultural employers to promote a balance between individual achievement and teamwork, as well as promotion of self-control and self-responsibility. We would encourage employers to avoid policies rooted in "victimhood" or "learned helplessness" that denigrate the worth of the individual. We would like to see the state encourage employers to provide business-related accommodations for religious and spiritual activities that have been shown to promote self-esteem and personal well-being and thus reduce the risk of suicide.</p> <p>Employers could focus corporate training not related to a specific job on problem solving skills, such as "Seven Step Problem Solving," criteria for developing "well-formed outcomes," "Fishbone Diagrams," "T-Square" analysis, "20 questions about the situation," "Reframing," and other strategies that help people get "unstuck," when faced with problems. This would not only reduce suicide risks, but would increase employee competence, job performance, and improve worker confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>Unfortunately, current “Red Flag” laws in Colorado discourage gun owners from seeking mental health treatment by making mental health care workers potential agents of the state with the ability to request emergency protective orders that deprive citizens of their right to armed self-defense without meaningful due process at the front end of the procedure.</p> <p>Because of the measure's focus on one means of suicide rather than addressing the motivation for suicide, we are opposed to the bill. We urge a “No” vote.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration,</p> <p>Robert Edmiston Volunteer Lobbyist The Firearms Coalition of Colorado PO Box 1454, Englewood, CO 80150-1454</p>
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