

January 21, 2021

Representatives of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Catherine Lee (Plath) and I live on a farm outside Davenport, ND with my family who are gun owners. I appreciate the opportunity to submit my thoughts on this important topic.

I ask you to please give a do NOT PASS recommendation to HB 1293.

Growing up in this state I've always thought of its people as sensible and down to earth. This proposed bill removes what few safety efforts exist for acquiring a gun, and thus, for the members of our state. Qualifying for a permit is one of the pathways to safe and responsible gun ownership.

In an article released in August, the CDC reported that 10.7% of Americans had seriously contemplated suicide in the weeks of June. This startling number is up from 4.3% from the same time in 2018. The rates of suicide ideation were highest among unpaid caregivers for adults, and 18-24 year olds. Annually 22,926 people die by gun suicide each year in our nation. Of that number, North Dakota has the 11th highest rate of gun suicide deaths in the U.S. These statistics do not lend themselves to loosening existing policies to acquiring gun permits.

Please consider the safety of North Dakotans first. I'm all for people having guns, but let's just make it safe for everyone.

Respectfully,

Catherine Lee