

Brady
840 First St. NE Ste. 400
Washington, DC 20002



Testimony of Liddy Ballard, State Policy Manager, Brady
Support for SB25-034 Before the Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee
February 06, 2025

Chair Weissman, Vice Chair Sullivan, and distinguished members of the Colorado Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee,

Founded in 1974, Brady takes a comprehensive approach to freeing America from gun violence by working to change the laws, change the courts, and change the culture across the country. Our organization today carries the name of Jim Brady, who was shot and severely injured in the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. Brady continues to uphold Jim and his wife, Sarah's, legacy by uniting Americans across the country in the fight to end gun violence.

The bill before you today, SB25-034, will save lives by allowing proactive individuals in fear of harming themselves or others to voluntarily waive the right to purchase firearms. **For this reason, Brady strongly urges a favorable report of SB25-034 from the Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee.**

With SB25-034, Colorado would follow the states of Washington and Delaware's lead in introducing a voluntary waiver as a suicide prevention tool. Firearms are the most lethal method used in suicide deaths, with a fatality rate of approximately 90 percent.¹ Frequently, the decision to harm oneself is made abruptly: a quarter of individuals who attempt suicide make the attempt within 5 minutes of deciding to end their lives.² This means that putting barriers in place to prevent easy access to lethal means can delay a suicide attempt in the event of a crisis, giving someone who is struggling more time to seek help. In fact, 46% of people at high risk of suicide at the University of Alabama Medical Center indicated they would voluntarily enroll themselves onto a firearm purchase delay list.³ This bill provides avenues for

¹ Miller, M., Azrael, D., Hemenway, D. (2004). The epidemiology of case fatality rates for suicide in the northeast. *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, 43(6), 723-30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annemergmed.2004.01.018>

² Simon, T.R., Swann, A.C., Powell, K.E., Potter, L.B., Kresnow, M., O'Carroll, P.W. (2011). Characteristics of impulsive suicide attempts and attempters. *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior*, 32(s1), 49-59. <https://doi.org/10.1521/suli.32.1.5.49.24212>

³ Vars, F.E., McCullumsmith, C.B., Shelton, R.C., Cropsey, K.L. (2017). Willingness of mentally ill individuals to sign up for a novel proposal to prevent firearm suicide. *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior*, 47(4), 483-492. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12302>

individuals who may be struggling with suicidal ideation to take action to keep themselves safe from firearms and will help prevent suicides in the State of Colorado.

What this Bill Does

SB25-034 establishes a Voluntary Do-Not-Sell Firearms Waiver; persons who voluntarily waive the right to purchase a firearm are prohibited from obtaining or possessing a firearm until they request their waiver be revoked, and no individual may sell or transfer a firearm to a person who has filed a waiver. Upon acceptance of the voluntarily filed waiver, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) will enter the voluntary waiver into the National Instant Criminal Background Checks System (NICS). A person must file for revocation of the waiver with the CBI; waivers are valid for 30 days following approval of revocation. Attempting to purchase a firearm after voluntarily waiving the right to purchase a firearm is a civil infraction.

Simply stated, this bill will save lives. Brady thanks Senator Kipp for her sponsorship of this bill and strongly encourages the Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee to support SB25-034.

Sincerely,
Liddy Ballard
State Policy Manager
Brady

**Testimony in opposition to: SB25-034 CO Voluntary Do Not Sell Act
The Firearms Coalition of Colorado**

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 opposition to the measure under consideration. We believe this bill is a solution in search of a problem. Colorado already has a three-day waiting period to purchase a firearm that more than covers the impulsive decision argument listed as a rationale for this measure.

According to the Fiscal Note, implementation of the bill would cost about \$235,000, including the cost of portal development and project management costs over the next two fiscal years. We believe this money could be better spent funding victims' advocacy programs, which we believe are likely to be underfunded for the immediate future.

We urge a "No" vote on this bill.

Thank you.

Robert Edmiston
Volunteer Lobbyist
The Firearms Coalition of Colorado
PO Box 1454, Englewood, CO 80150-1454

Dear Distinguished Members of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee,

Signing SB25-034, Voluntary Do-Not-Sell Firearms Waiver, will be taking a significant step for helping to reduce gun suicide rates, which are very high in our State. As you are aware, 71% of gun violence in Colorado is firearm suicide. Colorado has the 13th highest rate of gun suicide and was 8th in the nation for overall number of suicides.

When a firearm is used in a suicide attempt, there isn't any opportunity to for a second chance, since they are nearly always lethal (9 out of 10 die). When suicide attempts occur, they are often brief and impulsive.

Surviving one suicide attempt makes all the difference. Approximately 90% of survivors of suicide do not attempt suicide again. Research shows that delaying access to firearms significantly reduces gun suicides without increasing non-gun suicides.

One last point – in a recent survey, almost half of individuals receiving psychiatric treatment said they would voluntarily restrict their own ability to purchase a firearm. That point alone is reason to pass SB25-034.

I implore you to pass this significant piece of legislation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thomas Wilson

Aurora

Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

02/06/2025 Upon Adjournment

SB25-034 Voluntary Do-Not-Sell Firearms Waiver

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Jamie Lightner Against themselves	Enough with the war on our God given rights! When will you understand that the 2nd Amendment is a right that you cannot take away?
Rionda Osman For League of Women Voters of Colorado	<p>Written testimony submitted to the Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee</p> <p>In support of SB25-034 – Voluntary Do-Not-Sell Firearms Waiver</p> <p>Submitted by Rionda Osman, Boulder CO</p> <p>I am the head of the Task Force on Gun Violence Prevention of the League of Women Voters of Colorado. The League is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the proliferation of semi-automatic/automatic weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.</p> <p>I submit this letter as testimony in support of SB25-034 – Voluntary Do-Not-Sell Firearms Waiver. This bill establishes a process for a person to voluntarily waive their right to purchase firearms. The Colorado Department of Public Safety (CDPS) will be directed to develop an online portal for these waivers and for verification of identity. CDPS must also update state and federal computer systems to reflect the status of the waiver.</p> <p>Suicide rates in Colorado are very high: in 2023 Colorado ranked 13th in the nation for gun suicide and was 8th for the number of overall suicides. Of all firearm deaths in Colorado in 2023, 70% were suicides.</p> <p>When a person uses a firearm to commit suicide, their chance of success is 9 out of 10. So, using a firearm greatly increases the probability that the person will die; there will be very few second chances. Because the impulse to commit suicide is often</p>

	<p>temporary, the chance to survive an attempted suicide allows a person an opportunity for support and treatment. Approximately only 10% of serious suicide-attempt survivors will go on to die by suicide.</p> <p>By allowing individuals to place themselves voluntarily on a do-not-sell list, Colorado will interrupt the suicide trend in our state.</p> <p>I urge you to support this bill in the interests of the health and safety of Colorado’s citizens.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Rionda Osman, 31 January 2025</p>
<p>Joseph Pero Against themselves</p>	<p>I am writing to strongly urge you to please stand against SB25-034, the Self-Red Flag bill. This proposal is not just an ineffective use of legislative time; it undermines the very principles of personal responsibility and common sense. If an individual has the awareness and courage to consider self-red flagging, surely, they possess the judgment to responsibly secure their firearms and take them to their local sheriff’s office for proper disposal. It is a straightforward and sensible solution that respects both individual rights and community safety.</p> <p>Moreover, the thought of someone having to seek permission from the State to reclaim their own firearms after self-red flagging is both disheartening and absurd. I fear this is a process that would lead to frustration and despair for those who simply wish to do the right thing.</p> <p>Please vote firmly against SB25-034 and protect our community's freedom and well-being.</p>
<p>Laura Noejovich For themselves</p>	<p>Honorable Members of the Senate Committee,</p> <p>My name is Laura Noejovich, and I am a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist working with individuals who have cognitive-communication disorders, many of whom are also managing mental health challenges. I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 25-034, which seeks to establish a process for individuals to voluntarily waive their right to purchase a firearm.</p> <p>In my work, I see firsthand how cognitive and emotional well-being can significantly impact decision-making and personal safety. Many of the individuals I work with struggle with cognitive-communication impairments that can affect their judgment, impulse control, ability to evaluate risk, and recognize safety hazards. These individuals often experience mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression,</p>

	<p>and stress, which may further impair their decision-making abilities in high-stakes situations.</p> <p>Senate Bill 25-034 is a compassionate and practical measure that recognizes the intersection between cognitive health, mental health, and personal safety. It provides a responsible pathway for individuals who may be vulnerable or facing a mental health crisis to voluntarily waive their right to purchase a firearm, without fear of legal repercussions or unnecessary barriers.</p> <p>I believe this bill is important for several reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Protecting Vulnerable Populations: Cognitive-communication disorders are often linked to conditions such as traumatic brain injury, stroke, dementia, and mental health disorders. Individuals with these conditions may struggle with the impulse control needed to safely own a firearm. This bill allows them to make a responsible choice for their safety and the safety of others, reducing the risk of harm during times of cognitive or emotional vulnerability.2. Reducing Impulse-Driven Decisions: Many individuals with cognitive or emotional impairments may be unable to fully evaluate the consequences of their actions, especially in moments of crisis. By providing an option to waive the right to purchase a firearm, we are giving them a tool to make more informed decisions, supporting their well-being and that of their communities.3. Promoting Mental Health Awareness and Safety: As a clinician, I have worked with individuals who are in a fragile state, struggling to manage both their mental and cognitive health. These conditions can cloud judgment and, in some cases, increase the risk of impulsive actions. By allowing individuals to voluntarily relinquish their right to purchase a firearm, we are encouraging a proactive approach to self-care and mental health management. It's a step that reduces the risk of firearm-related violence and self-harm during particularly challenging periods.4. Autonomy and Empowerment: Giving individuals the opportunity to voluntarily waive their right to purchase a firearm empowers them to take control of their own safety. It allows them to make a responsible choice that acknowledges their current capacity for decision-making, fostering autonomy in a time when they may feel uncertain or vulnerable.
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	<p>5. Reducing Risks Associated with Cognitive-Communication Disorders and Mental Health: Research indicates that individuals who experience significant mental health crises or cognitive impairments are at higher risk of engaging in self-harming behaviors or being involved in violent incidents when firearms are present. By facilitating a voluntary process for waiving this right, we are offering a preventive measure that supports public safety while respecting individual autonomy.</p> <p>This bill does not seek to infringe upon the rights of responsible firearm owners, but instead offers a thoughtful option for those who may be struggling with their cognitive or mental health and need a pathway to ensure they do not have access to firearms at a time when they may not be in the best position to use them safely.</p> <p>I urge the Committee to support Senate Bill 25-034. By passing this legislation, we are providing an important tool for individuals with cognitive-communication disorders and mental health challenges to make decisions that prioritize their safety and well-being.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration. I fully support Senate Bill 25-034 and hope you will join me in endorsing this important piece of legislation.</p> <p>Sincerely, Laura Noejovich, M.S. CCC-SLP Speech-Language Pathologist</p>
<p>Ben Lemon Against themself</p>	<p>I am opposed to this bill as it is not aligned with our Nations Constitution.</p>
<p>Linda Magid For themself</p>	<p>My daughter is 20 years old. She has been in and out of mental health facilitates since she was 14. We are thrilled to say that today she is well and working hard to stay well. Unfortunately, mental health issues flare up at any time and she back slides. In late 2024, our daughter spontaneously took a handful of pills intending to end her life. Thankfully, she realized after the pills had been swallowed that she didn't want to die and took herself to the ER. If that had been a firearm, she very likely would not have survived her attempt, as someone with a firearm is 80% more like to die from an attempted suicide than other kinds of attempts.</p>

	<p>Having the option to self-identify as someone who should not own a firearm would be a huge relief to our family. We hope she never considers killing herself again but without that guarantee, this bill gives us one more safety opportunity. Please vote for this bill.</p>
<p>Mark Longshore For Colorado Nurses Association</p>	<p>I am an Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurse who has been in the field for 48 years and am currently in private practice in the Denver Metro area providing psychotherapy and medication management, and I am representing myself and the Colorado Nurses Association. Thank you to the sponsors for bringing this important legislation forward because anything we can do to decrease the incidence of suicide is extremely worthwhile. It is not uncommon for behavioral health patients to have fluctuating impulse control and judgment, and anyone can go into a crisis dealing with the stresses of life especially when combined with a serious behavioral health disorder. A crisis is temporary, but suicidality with a firearm is almost always permanent. Patients and their providers often know in advance that the person can be suicidal when stressors are too high or if their emotional state fluctuates too severely. This bill can provide a safeguard to help our clients protect themselves in times of high vulnerability. With adequate support, a 30 day waiver is usually an adequate length of time to restabilize and re-establish a baseline level of functioning with adequate impulse control and judgment. For these reasons I strongly support SB25-034 and request a yes vote from all of you.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important legislation.</p> <p>Laura Mehringer, MS, RXN, CNS, APRN-BC 10465 Melody Dr, Ste 226 Northglenn, CO 80234 720.839.9620</p>