



★ DELAWARE COALITION AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

I am George Higgins, a resident of Hockessin and Executive Director Emeritus of the Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence. I speak in support of HB300, to regulate bump stocks and other devices designed to accelerate a firearm's rate of fire. As a gun owner myself, appointee to the Firearm Suicide Prevention Coalition, advisory member of the Delaware Violent Death Reporting System and member of the Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition, I wish to bring a sobering perspective.

The Las Vegas shooting resulted in 58 deaths and injured more than 700. With law enforcement closing in, the shooter took his own life. As reported by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, 14 bump stocks affixed to the shooter's guns were found at the crime scene.

The gun lobby likes to frame the "assault weapon" as a "modern sporting rifle". The Las Vegas shooting readily illustrates the "modern sport" for which these rifles and rate-of-fire enhancing devices have been designed.

To be clear, mass shootings are perpetrated by people who have no "exit plan." They do not expect to survive, by definition these shooters are suicidal.

The Las Vegas shooter had built an arsenal, scouted out the terrain, acted just like everyone else, not divulging the specific plan – exactly what happened at Virginia Tech, Aurora, Isla Vista, Orlando, Sutherland Springs, Sandy Hook and just about everywhere else where a rampage shooting has occurred since 1966 from the top of the University of Texas Tower.

Suicidal shooters building arsenals are now including rate-of-fire enhancing devices like the bump stock – rhetorically, how at risk are we here in Delaware?

Let me show you a photo - the mother of a 20-something young man who had recently completed suicide, walked into Troop-1 Penn Hill to relinquish firearms her son had accumulated. He had at his disposal assault weapons, plenty of ammunition, and high capacity magazines. Highly-armed and suicidal, this time we lost this one young man alone, though the risk is apparent, the choice of who he shot was solely his.

Consider public safety for the Firefly Festival and similar events; without bump stocks for these "modern sporting weapons" there will be less mess to clean up when the inevitable happens.

Please support and champion expedited passage of HB 300.