

**Testimony of David Carttar**

**Volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America**

**January 23, 2023, 9:00 AM**

Dear Chair Carpenter, Committee members, and staff:

I was born in Kansas, and have lived here for most of my life. I love this state, and all the people who call it home. I am writing because I believe HCR 5020 will threaten public safety in our state by making existing gun-safety laws nearly unenforceable, and by preventing us from passing any further laws that can keep guns out of the hands of people who we all agree shouldn't have them.

As a gun-violence-prevention volunteer since 2017, I have learned the stories of countless survivors, victims, and their families. They have suffered losses that none of us should wish on others in our state: deaths and life-changing injuries that cannot be undone, and that too many of us appreciate only when they affect our own loved ones.

What could be undone if the standard of strict scrutiny is applied to gun rights in the Kansas Constitution, are laws that prohibit felons and domestic abusers from possessing guns, and laws that protect children and other vulnerable people from suicide and unintentional shootings by encouraging guns and ammunition to be stored safely.

Already in Kansas, gun fatalities have replaced car accidents as the leading cause of death for children and teens in Kansas. Firearms are the leading means of suicide in the state, and account for more than half of all intimate-partner homicides. Our citizens deserve protection through reasonable gun-safety legislation, now and in the future.

If adopted, however, strict scrutiny would threaten to eliminate Kansas's most crucial public-safety laws, and would even force taxpayers to pay for legal challenges by criminal defendants. Prior experience in Missouri and Louisiana offers fair warning to you as legislators, and to all of us as citizens. We must retain the freedom to protect ourselves, our children, and our communities from constitutional straightjackets like HCR 5020.

I encourage members of the committee to vote NO on this dangerous resolution, in the interest of your constituents and of all your fellow Kansans.

Respectfully,  
David Carttar  
Lawrence, Kansas