

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

October 15, 2015

Mayor John Engen and Missoula City Council  
435 Ryman St.  
Missoula, MT 59802

Mayor John Engen and the Missoula City Council:

We write to express our strong concerns with the Missoula City Council Public Safety and Health Committee's substantial intrusion into the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding gun owners through its proposed expansion of regulations on private firearm transfers. While we value local decision making, it is essential that policies at every level of government uphold the rights granted to all Americans under the U.S. Constitution. Therefore we feel obligated on this rare occasion to express our opposition to the misguided ordinance which would create unnecessary burdens on law-abiding Montanans while proving ineffective in preventing violent crime.

We, along with all Montanans, are saddened and outraged by recent acts of violence. As history has repeatedly shown, however, firearm restriction proposals have not prevented dangerous persons from possessing firearms and committing crimes. In recent tragedies, for example, perpetrators of violent crimes passed background checks through the Federal Bureau of Investigations' National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Instead, policies such as your proposed ordinance only penalize individuals who safely and lawfully own and wish to sell firearms through private transactions. Furthermore, this ordinance implicates both U.S. and Montana Constitutional and statutory principles.

In short, while the proposed ordinance is undoubtedly well-intentioned, we believe focusing on ineffective policies distracts from increasing access to mental health care and places an unwarranted penalty on law-abiding Montanans. Accordingly, we respectfully urge you to withdraw it.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES  
United States Senator



RYAN ZINKE  
United States Representative