



Testimony of Kevin Borrup, Violence Prevention Program Director at Connecticut Children's Medical Center to the Judiciary Committee regarding HB 5818

March 24, 2006

Good morning. Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, members of the Judiciary Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Kevin Borrup, and I live in Newington. I am also the Director of the Violence Prevention Program at Connecticut Children's Medical Center. I am testifying in support of **House Bill 5818, *An Act Concerning Lost Or Stolen Firearms***.

This act will give law enforcement the ability to better hold gun owners accountable for keeping their weapon secure and out of the hands of unauthorized users, including youth and children.

Violence against self and others is a major public health problem, particularly for youth. In the United States violent death is among the top ten causes of death for youth and children (WISQARS, 2004). It is the second leading cause of death for youth 15-24 years old. Here are the facts on kids and firearms:

- Youth homicides accounted for 28% of all homicides, a rate more than twice as high as in the general population.
- 70% of suspects in these homicides were in same age group. (2003-2004, National Violent Death Reporting System, Harvard University).
- Among urban students 17% reported carrying a weapon in the last 30 days.
- 18.1% reported making a suicide plan.
- 7.6% felt too unsafe to attend school.
- 9.2% of youth reported being threatened or injured by a weapon on school grounds
- Nearly 40% of homes in the US with children have a gun and every other day on average a child under 10 is killed or disabled with a gun.
- Police recover 8% of crime guns from those 17 and younger (Crime Gun Trace Reports (2000)).
- Police recover 33% of crime guns from those 18-24 (Crime Gun Trace Reports (2000)).

In CT in 2001 and 2002, there were 88 homicides using handguns and 20 using long guns. Of the homicide victims forty-one percent (41%) were under the age of 25.

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This legislation will NOT keep law-abiding citizens from owning firearms, but it will require that gun owners report lost or stolen firearms.

A responsible competent adult in legal possession of a firearm should obey the law and keep guns away from children, understanding that Connecticut law provides penalties for those who fail to secure or store a firearm, and with the addition of this law, failing to report a missing weapon. The very purpose of our law around background checks and registration is to ensure that only competent responsible non-violent adults capable of following the law are allowed to possess firearms. Leaving a loophole in the law will continue to allow criminal gun purchasers/sellers to take advantage of a situation where there is no enforceable penalty should a crime gun be traced back to them. They can simply claim that sometime in the past it was lost or stolen and that they did not feel the need to report it. The same criminal gun seller can give this story for one firearm or a hundred firearms.

In the interests of preventing intentional and unintentional injuries to children, I urge you to support House Bill 5818. I thank you for your attention.

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