

24 March 2006

Public Hearing, Judiciary Committee.
Concerning HB 5818 An Act Concerning Lost of Stolen Firearms.

Dear Connecticut Judiciary Committee Members,

I ask that you oppose the passage of HB 5818.

One of the concepts of being American is the right to be innocent until proven guilty. The idea behind it is the vast majority of people will be upstanding law abiding citizens, and only a small number will be law breakers. Consider the consequences to our society if every single one of us would go out today and break the law. Our entire concept, given to us by our founding fathers, of being a free people, of being innocent until proven guilty would be gone.

An increase in the number of people breaking the law can also occur not due to an epidemic of criminal activity, but simply due to the expansion of additional laws. With HB 5818, you, I or anyone in this room could instantly become guilty of a felony or misdemeanor, simply due to the encroachment and proliferation of additional legislation. I consider HB 5818 as creating a situation which I consider the wrong direction for us to go.

Section 1 of HB 5818 is too vague. It allows the terms "in such a manner as to ensure", and "not a substantial and unjustifiable risk that such firearm will be stolen", to be interpreted differently, by different people. The language in HB 5818 will ultimately be interpreted by someone, and whomever that person is, and whatever their interpretation of the terms are, the average citizen will be held accountable with it's compliance. They will be accountable then and when the implementation of it is different in the future. The interpretation of this section will change over time due to it's vagueness. It is not fair to the people who wish to obey the law to have the identical language in the statute be subjected to a changing set of interpretations over time.

Let us not deceive ourselves with false illusions. Criminals do not need firearms to commit their crimes. Murder, rape and robbery are still against the law, and can just as easily be committed with clubs, baseball bats and knives, and often are.

The average law abiding citizen who wishes to be safe and secure in their home and in their travel by their choice of owning a firearm should not be the subject of harassment by poorly crafted legislation created by their own government. The decision to own a firearm protect one's self and family from harm is a right that should be upheld and cherished, and not endangered and encroached upon with a myriad of new and confusing laws.

It should be prima facie evidence that someone committing murder, rape or robbery is guilty of a serious crime, and ought to be thrown in jail regardless of if a firearm was used or not. It should be prima facie evidence that if someone is breaking into another person's home and stealing articles of value, that the person doing the breaking and entering ought to be the one who is considered breaking the law. HB 5818 does the opposite and punishes the victim of crime who has had their homes invaded and their property stolen.

This legislation in my opinion, seems to be driven simply by an illogical fear of firearms.

Thank you for your time,

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