



**Testimony of Kevin Borrup, Violence Prevention Program Director at Connecticut Children's Medical Center to the Judiciary Committee regarding HB 6901, SB 903, and SB 904.**

**April 10, 2007**

Good morning. Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, members of the Judiciary Committee. I appreciate having 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 **Requiring the Reporting of *Lost Or Stolen Firearms*.**

This act will give law enforcement the ability to better hold gun owners accountable for keeping their firearms 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 also youth. (2003-2004, National Violent Death Reporting System, Harvard University).
- Among urban students 17% reported carrying a weapon in the last 30 days.
- 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 Connecticut, firearms account for approximately 60% of all homicides. Urban residents in Connecticut experience a rate of homicide that is nearly three times the rate for suburban areas. By race, the homicide rate for Blacks in this state is about eight times the rate for Whites. Men account for more than 70% of homicide victims.

The current proposal will give law enforcement one of the tools it needs to hold criminal gun sellers and purchasers accountable. A law-abiding citizen should have no legitimate issue with having to report a lost or stolen firearm. Leaving a loophole in the law will continue to allow criminal gun purchasers/sellers to claim that a gun they purchased, used in a murder, was stolen or lost sometime in the past with no repercussions.

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Despite having a relatively low rate of homicide overall, Connecticut has great disparities in homicide rates by age and race. Statistically, being young, black, and male and living in an urban area, places you comparatively at greater risk for being killed by a firearm, despite there being limited legal avenues for acquiring a firearm. Straw purchasers of firearms are one of the mechanisms driving this kind of disparity in Connecticut.

In the interests of preventing intentional injuries to youth and children, I urge you to support this proposal. I thank you for your attention.

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