

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 6901, SB 903, SB 904
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY KIMBERLY SUNDQUIST, PRESIDENT OF
SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE, INC.**

Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Kimberly Sundquist from Manchester, Ct. I am the president for Survivors Of Homicide, Inc, and I would like to submit written testimony today to voice my support for requiring the reporting of lost and stolen firearms. I apologize for not being able to attend today for the public hearing, but due to my vigorous work schedule; I was unable to take the time off to offer my story to you personally.

On September 11, 2003, I received a visit from my mother. I thought she was there for my 2 children whose birthdays were both that week, one being the next day and the other on the 15th. She did not come bearing gifts, however; rather she came bearing the news that my favorite uncle was murdered in what looked to be a robbery gone badly. I recall that moment as if it were an out of body experience. I can actually see the puzzled look on my face when I looked at my mom and asked "Shot? He was shot? But he is ok?" And she nodded to gesture that he was not ok. I said one word... "Dead?" And she nodded to indicate that yes he was dead. At that moment, I re entered my body just in time to realize what was being told to me and all I could do was sob and scream that some bastard shot Uncle Jerry.

Ten months later an off duty police officer was driving past a local Elks club and found it suspicious that a vehicle was exiting the property at 2:30 AM with it's headlights off. The policeman followed the vehicle to obtain the license plate number and returned to the lodge to find that it had been robbed and lit on fire. After the driver and stepson were apprehended for that robbery and arson, the 14 year old admitted to the authorities that he and his stepfather were the ones who killed my beloved uncle.

At my uncle's funeral, I had to witness my grandmother falling into the casket of her first born, his grand daughters afraid to approach him, and his long time girlfriend pacing in front of the casket for an hour unaware of what reality was or how she got there. I also watched as a woman fainted unable to bear the tragic loss. I tried to remain strong for the family, but was unable to do so.

The man who is accused of murdering my uncle had a lengthy criminal history ranging from larceny to aggravated assault. He has been in jail for a number of violent crimes that spanned for nearly half his life. He had been in jail for 2 and a half years with a very high bond to give the authorities time to gather evidence in my uncle's case, however the only evidence that still remains to this day is the prior admissions of the juvenile. One week after the 3rd anniversary of my uncle's murder, we found out that within the next 3 months, if they didn't get more evidence, the killer would walk, regardless if he is guilty or not. We know by the words of the child, we had the right man; however, we needed the smoking gun, which never materialized. On December 22, 2006, the pair was released into the general public. History tells us this man will be back in jail before the summer.

(OVER)

How did a convicted felon obtain such a weapon? The answer is simple; he either stole it or it was sold to him illegally. Regardless of how he obtained this weapon, a crime was committed before he even pointed that gun at my uncle by him having the weapon in the first place, and we need to close the loop hole that allows people to “**CHRONICALLY**” lose their firearms but to use the law to claim it was lost or stolen to avoid prosecution while still maintaining a healthy living. By keeping this loophole as it is, it allows people to sell guns illegally and we cannot even track who has claimed it was lost or stolen on more than one occasion.

We have a right to own guns, but that right comes with a responsibility to store your weapon in a safe and secure place, and to **ALWAYS** know where it is. Firearms are not permitted to be owned by a person who is a threat to any single human being or society as a whole. This bill is asking of the state’s lawmakers to make it mandatory that legal gun owners are made to remain responsible of their firearm.

My uncle was **THAT** guy in the family that everyone would watch because he was the funny one. He would always do something to make the crowd roar with laughter. He endured 3 heart surgeries to save his life and was even a leg amputee for his heart condition because a blood clot struck him. He never complained about being handicapped or these surgeries because he knew he wanted to live and fought for those 5 years preceding his death to save his life which he knew was very precious. Ironically, my uncle was shot in the heart he fought so hard to save. Time and family are the most important gifts we, as human beings, have ever been given and time with my uncle was robbed from me and my family. We are a middle class family from Rocky Hill and Durham, CT. If this can happen to my family, this can certainly happen to anyone of us. I am here today to ask you to support these proposals to help stop illegal gun trafficking so that my uncle will not have died in vain, and to know that even though he could not be helped by these bills, we, together can help save at least one life and to save a family from having to endure what my family has lived the past 3 and a half years. To vote no would be a crime to the residents of CT and would allow people to obtain firearms illegally.

I am not opposing the second amendment or any legal gun owner’s rights but I am for closing loopholes that allow people to claim a firearm was lost or stolen when they in actuality sold the firearm to someone who did not possess morals or good intentions. I also want to make sure that people who do own firearms legally receive a wakeup call that if they want to own their firearms, they must be responsible and know where that firearm is at all times, And if you don’t...**REPORT IT!!!**

Thank you for your attention.