



CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

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Testimony to the Judiciary Committee

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Chiefs Anthony Salvatore & James Strillacci, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

The West Hartford police range hosted a recent demonstration of the micro-stamping technology proposed in **RB #607, AAC Identification of Certain Firearms**. If it works as advertised, there would be benefits to public safety by accelerating identification of guns used in crimes.

Today, shell casings found at a crime scene cannot be positively linked to a particular firearm until a suspect gun is seized, test-fired, and its ejected casing compared by an examiner to the crime-scene casings. If stamping becomes prevalent, microscope examination of a casing will yield the gun's make, model, and an identifying number.

This will allow for a trace to be instituted which may lead to the perpetrator of the crime. Even if the trace is interrupted by the gun's theft or illegal transfer, the stamp's identification of the crime gun will allow police to recognize it and seize it if they encounter it during a car stop, search, or other activity unrelated to the original crime.

We understand that this measure is no panacea; criminals may find ways to circumvent the system, and some guns do not eject shell casings when fired. We cannot vouch for any particular supplier of this technology, nor can we comment on the technology's cost to gun manufacturers and consumers. But if the cost to the consumer proves to be nominal, Connecticut police chiefs believe that the price will be outweighed by the safety benefit to the public.

The Connecticut chiefs support **RB #604, AAC Hate Crimes**, which will put the placing of a noose on a par with cross-burning as a prohibited act of intimidation and hate.

This bill may not make a case easier to solve, because investigations hinge on the presence or absence of evidence. But it should make it easier to prosecute once the perpetrator is identified, because it identifies the act as a hate crime and not a mere breach of peace or criminal mischief.

Most important, this bill will serve as a clear statement that our state rejects the use of symbols intended to frighten any segment of our community.

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