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Testimony of Hans D. Justus in regards to S.B. No. 603 and S.B. No. 607 on 3/17/08.

S.B. 603

* This bill will do absolutely nothing in terms of reducing crimes involving firearms; it asks criminals to do what by definition they do not – obey the law. No criminal will identify himself to buy encoded ammunition.

* What this bill *will* do is:

1. Make ammunition so expensive as to price the average sport shooter out of business.
2. Place law abiding citizens at risk of criminal prosecution thru loss or theft of his ammunition or his/her inability to confirm that all bullets in a box carry the same code as listed on the container.

* Coding bullets on the base is new art, not a proven method. There are many different base configurations, different materials, different hardness levels – and that is before the bullet is fired. In real life, you will find that the bases are marred from the impingement of hot gasses and powder residue and that recovered bullets most often are deformed and are missing fragments.

* There is also the real possibility that manufacturers will opt out of the Connecticut market, Creating a ‘ Prohibition like ‘ scenario with new demands on law enforcement .

S.B. 607

* Micro etching of the firing pin tip is technically feasible, what is not feasible, is the prevention degradation of the markings due to wear or deliberate obliteration. Firing pins contact and deform primers that are made of various materials and hardness (military primers), guaranteeing wear and making it difficult to prove intend to deface the markings.

* The etching of markings onto the breech face of a weapon, to theoretically transfer these characters to the base of fired cartridge casings is probably based on a laboratory demo under controlled conditions. It cannot be relied upon to consistently result in a readable display. Again, in the real world, there are cartridge casings of brass, steel, coated or plated with various materials, all of different hardness levels. In addition, the bases of cartridge cases carry numerous markings; caliber designation, manufacturers codes etc.

* If the breech face etchings are negative, they will fill with firing residue, paint or metal shavings from fired casings or gun lubricants – all of which can be observed on fired weapons.

* Should someone decide on positive (raised) characters, safety issues (Head Space) can make those guns dangerous to fire.

Concluding, both bills do not assist in reducing gun violence as they create no obstacles for criminals but only for law abiding citizens.

They are cost prohibitive for the average sportsman, will result in more small sporting goods stores going out of business, end up further inflating an already bloated state bureaucracy and cost the state tax dollars to boot.