



March 16, 2009

Joint Committee on Judiciary
Legislative Office Building
Room 2500
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Opposition to SB 353 An Act Concerning the Identification of Certain Firearms (Microstamping)

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Connecticut Association of Firearms Retailers (CTAFR) which is a non-profit trade association representing Connecticut firearms retailers. Our membership includes Connecticut-based federally licensed firearms retailers, most of which are small “mom-n-pop” businesses that are the backbone of the state’s economy. We would like to express our opposition with raised bill SB 353 that would mandate microstamping of firearms within Connecticut.

Studies have shown that the technology is not sufficiently reliable for use on firearms. Criminals can defeat it in a number of different ways, and it is well known that the overwhelming majority of handguns used in crimes are stolen, and that fired casings from them would not lead law enforcement to the actual perpetrator of the crime. Placing “microstamping” on semiautomatic handguns would be ineffective.

Microstamping is a “sole source” technology contrary to the claims and testimony of Mr. Todd Lizotte, from ID Dynamics. What results is a single entity that owns the technology which will license it to companies and manufacturers at any price they see fit. If this unproven technology for firearms did work, a matter that the results of recent independent scientific research casts in doubt and highly questions, it would be the system utilized. This increases the likelihood that the sole source problem would in fact continue and that the costs of using it would not be contained by realistic competition. The result would be higher costs for retailers and their customers for a system that is not reliable.

SB 353 would place a costly, unjustifiable and unrealistic burden on not only firearms retailers, but also the manufacturers and purchasers of them with no public policy benefit. Compelling the use of this unreliable sole sourced technology will dramatically reduce the product selection available to law abiding consumers in Connecticut, because some manufacturers will choose to abandon the market rather than

incur substantial costs associated with complying, which would include purchasing (at monopolistic prices) very expensive equipment and patented technology and completely redesigning their manufacturing processes, plant and equipment.

Connecticut's firearms laws are so voluminous and complex that the average resident of this state cannot understand them. At the same time most Connecticut firearms dealers are small business people who are already over-burdened with a myriad of state laws and regulations, many of which are unnecessary and costly to implement. SB 353 is just another example of this problem and it would, without any proven benefit to the State of Connecticut, make it more difficult for firearms dealers to do business in this state. For these reasons, CTAFR is opposed to the enactment of SB 353.

We welcome the opportunity to participate in this important, public policy discussion and to make known our views. We would urge you to oppose SB 353 and instead support the recommendations of the researchers for further research of this technology

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian M. Owens". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Brian Owens
President