

Dear Chairman/Chairwoman _____, members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, my name is Elana Bertram residing in Newtown in Fairfield County, and I am testifying in opposition to H5158 An Act Concerning the Regulation of Firearms.

Section 10 would eliminate private sales of long guns (rifles and shotguns) as has been a commonly accepted practice among sportsmen, target shooters, hunters, collectors, friends and family members handing them down through generations. I ask what social problem this regulation is intended to cure.

Our state is not plagued by intentional shootings with hunting rifles or shotguns. In fact, tens of thousands of rifles and shotguns have been privately transferred throughout the history of our state and it has rarely been an issue of concern for Public Safety. Section 10 would require the registration of long guns along with an authorization for the sale or transfer as is currently done for handguns.

How can you justify the increased administrative costs of this new regulation? It seems a bald-faced attempt to restrict access to basic firearms, which are lawfully used by thousands of our citizens for hunting and home defense. This goes hand-in-hand with the recent increase in permit fees and makes it appear that Connecticut is moving in a very anti-Second Amendment direction. I propose that the resources earmarked for this new registry would be better spent toward the thousands of outstanding criminal arrest warrants that exist in the State.

Further, this registry is only effective if existing long guns come back into the "system" by being re-sold at retail after this law passes. Passing legislation with no means of enforcement only weakens the law. Existing long guns transferred on an individual basis prior to the enactment of this legislation would be unaffected and could hypothetically bypass the regulation and be transferred to other individuals. This would nullify any imaginable benefit of either revenue from transfer fees or and likewise fail to supervise the gun use of law-abiding citizens.

In addition to Section 10, I am also opposed to Sec. 11 concerning Gun Shows and the 30-day notification process to both DPS and the local Chief of police for the town where the gun show is to be held. Again, in this economic climate, where the state must focus on reducing its deficit to enable it to operate, let alone provide needed services, there is no benefit to creating additional administrative burdens on gun show operators or the agencies supervising them. There is no anticipated improvement of Public Safety from this measure.

I urge the rejection of H5158 unless or until objectionable language in the above sections is removed.

Thank you,