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STATE & LOCAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

MEMORANDUM OF OPPOSITION

To: Honorable Members of the Connecticut Public Safety and Security Committee
From: Rebecca Williams, NRA-ILA Connecticut State Liaison
Subject: Raised H.B. No. 5158
Date: February 17, 2010

The National Rifle Association would like to communicate our position of opposition on Raised H.B. No.5158, currently pending consideration in the Public Safety and Security Committee.

In Sec. 10 of H.B. 5158, the elimination of the words “at retail” would outlaw the sale of ALL long guns between private individuals, extend the two-week waiting period to all long gun sales and institute registration of these firearms. This change to Sec.29-37a of the current statute would require person makes application on a form prescribed and furnished by the Commissioner of Public Safety, which shall be attached by the vendor to the federal sale or transfer document and filed and retained by the vendor for at least twenty years or until such vendor goes out of business. Such application shall be available for inspection during normal business hours by law enforcement officials. No sale or delivery of any firearm shall be made until the expiration of two weeks from the date of the application, and until the person, firm or corporation making such sale, delivery or transfer has insured that such application has been completed properly and has obtained an authorization number from the Commissioner of Public Safety for such sale, delivery or transfer.

The Department of Public Safety and proponents of this legislation have not demonstrated the need for this drastic change and cannot point to an increase in crimes committed with rifles and shotguns. In fact, these transactions are most commonly conducted between family members and well-known acquaintances.

Additionally, the elimination of the words “at retail” in Sec. 29-37a would subject the buyer to a two-week waiting period at a time when technology allows for instant background checks (National Instant Background Check - NICS) and our position is that rather than requiring qualified buyers to submit to this antiquated procedure, the state of Connecticut should abolish its waiting period.

Lastly, we oppose H.B. 5158 because it widens Connecticut’s current registration scheme to include even more law-abiding gun owners even though firearms registration has never been shown to increase public safety or decrease crime.

It is for the above stated reasons that we oppose Raised H.B. No. 5158. As always, I’m available at (703) 517-8102 should you wish to discuss the NRA’s position on this proposal.