



NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION, INC.

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JAKE McGUIGAN
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February 18, 2010

Public Safety and Security Committee
Legislative Office Building
Room 3600
Hartford, CT 06106

Position: **Oppose**

Re: **HB 5158** - An Act Concerning the Regulations of Firearms

Dear Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee:

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (“NSSF”) is the non-profit trade association for America’s firearms, ammunition, hunting and recreational shooting sports industry. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Connecticut sportsmen, the U.S. military and law enforcement agencies throughout Connecticut. This letter is to express our **opposition** to HB 5158. There is no rational basis upon which to justify the enactment of some of the sections in the proposed legislation.

The firearms industry has contributed \$743.8 million in total economic activity to Connecticut in 2008, employs more than 1,750 people in the state and generates an additional 3,100 jobs in supplier industries. In these difficult economic times, the firearms industry is still one of the few industries that has grown its profits while also contributing increased tax revenues to the state. The firearms business is a highly regulated entity on both the state and federal level. Some of the proposals contained in this legislation will do nothing to increase public safety and will only burden law-abiding businesses and gun owners.

Section 3

Our membership also 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. This is the reason why we have to raise concerns with Section 3 of the legislation. Section 3 changes the amount of time that a retailer has in order to submit a receipt for the purchase of a pistol or revolver to the DPS. The law originally stated that a retailer would have 48 hours to submit the receipt, which given the many circumstances a retailer faces was a reasonable timeframe. This legislation wants to amend the 48 hour window to 24 hours which might cause unforeseen difficulties. Let’s assume a firearms retailer makes a sale at 3:00 pm on a Saturday, according to changes in this section the owner only has 24 hours to submit the receipt. If the U.S Postal Service is the chosen method to submit the paperwork then the retailer would be in violation of the 24-hour period since it would not be sent until Monday at the earliest.

It seems that the selection of the 24-hour timeframe is simply an arbitrary number. I can envision facing similar legislation in years to come that will look to change it to 12 hours or simply the same business day because it seems reasonable to the author. Unfortunately though, much of the delay in getting the information into the system does not lie with the retailer, but rather an overworked staff at

the DPS. The increase in firearms sales throughout Connecticut has made the task even more difficult on DPS. Mandating that retailers send in paperwork inside of 24 hours will do nothing to increase the efficiency of the agency that handles this information.

Section 10

Section 10 of HB 5158 would essentially eliminate the sale of all long guns between individuals, and thus require an FFL (federally licensed firearms dealer) to be involved. Section 10 would eliminate private sales of long guns in Connecticut which has occurred between sportsmen, target shooters, hunters, collectors, friends and family members over many generations. Requiring the transfer to take place at an FFL would in turn increase the cost associated with the transaction for the buyer and seller. It has been proven time and time again that law-abiding citizens buying and selling firearms are not committing crimes. This change to the law will do nothing to enhance public safety and instead will add a burden to the citizens of this state.

The current economic environment facing the state does not lend itself well to the creation of more paperwork and oversight with little to no added benefit. The DPS will face additional stains on its workforce and more money and resources will be spent on administering long gun registration. Firearms retailers throughout the state have already been severely inconvenienced with the implementation of furlough days. While the state shuts down to save money, it is actually costing our retailers income since the shutdowns come on some of the busiest shopping days of the year. With that being the case firearms retailers should be concerned with how DPS can justify no fiscal impact from long gun registration.

The number of transactions that have occurred over the years involving the sale of rifles and shotguns is in the tens of thousands and somehow it has never garnered any attention from DPS. The fact that private party transactions have occurred for so many years problem-free, raises questions as to the necessity of this section. What public safety value is gained by creating long gun registration? How many crimes are actually committed with long guns? In this fiscal environment, does it make economical sense for the State Police to create and maintain a long gun registration database? These questions all need to be considered in the debate over HB 5158.

We would urge you to oppose HB 5158 or at least amend the sections of the bill that will cause difficulties to law-abiding gun-owners and the small businesses that Connecticut depends on for revenue.

Sincerely,



Jake McGuigan