

# COALITION OF CONNECTICUT SPORTSMEN

P.O. Box 2506, Hartford, CT 06146, (203) 245-8076

[www.ctsportsmen.com](http://www.ctsportsmen.com) [ccsct@comcast.net](mailto:ccsct@comcast.net)

Testimony presented to the **PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE**

## **IN SUPPORT OF H.B. No. 5274 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALE OF FIREARMS AT PUBLIC AUCTION**

by Robert T. Crook, Director

March 4, 2010

The State clearly has budget problems. Why then are state assets which could generate revenue being destroyed annually to the tune of \$300,000-400,000+ and consuming CT State Police manpower time and effort with no benefit to taxpayer or the state?

**We believe this is a critical item for passage in terms of both common sense and fiscal responsibility. The basic thrust of the bill is to promote and mandate firearm auctions to generate revenue and discontinue destroying state assets.**

There may be reluctance if not opposition to firearms auctions. The following is our position: [Written 1997, Consultation w/Gov. Rowland] "We believe destroying firearms is the height of hypocrisy. CT has statutes in place to auction confiscated firearms to citizens but has failed to do so since the early '90s. Why? One argument is that these guns are "bad" or "criminal" because they may have been confiscated from criminals. This anthropomorphic (ascribing human attributes to things not human) thinking cannot be described, at best, as other than juvenile. Another is that destroying guns makes fewer available to the criminal element - unreasoned thinking in a state that has several firearms manufacturers and allows legal sales of firearms. Or, sales of these guns to legal citizens under our restrictive gun laws would somehow increase crime, while those same citizens can purchase legally at stores and gun shows. Most important, refusal to auction is fiscally wrong, clearly contrary to proven legislative intent, and an affront to all taxpayers in the state through a significant loss of revenue. Criticism by the media is irrelevant."

### **We believe thousands of firearms are currently residing in state and local police evidence lockers.**

In New Haven (2009), 299 guns were seized by police; Hartford police reported seizing 449 guns in 2009; the total for two major cities 748. Data is unavailable for the other 170+ municipalities. In previous years, the state police said approximately 4,300 guns were destroyed in 2000 the most for the program. The number dropped to 3,300 in 2001; 2,700 in 2002 and 2,300 in 2003.

According to State Police data One-third of these firearms are rifles/shotguns. Auction data indicates an average long gun value of \$110; Handgun average \$185 (1993 Data). The current value of firearms and criminal upgrade of handguns (few "Saturday Night Specials") has increased.

Parts (stocks, rifle/shotgun receivers, barrels, magazines, ammunition, etc) will generate additional revenue. The revenue estimates of \$300,000-\$400,000+ do not reflect an auction registration fee of \$/?/person, sales tax generated, or expenses incurred.

Instant Check (NICS), enacted after the auctions, is in effect and substantially reduces administrative workload and enhances reliability of purchasers.

A similar statute allowing DEP auctions is not included in this bill.

We Urge Passage.

Thank you.