

Testimony for Public Hearing
Judiciary Committee

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H.B. 1094, “An Act Banning Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines”

To all members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am again writing in opposition to the proposed ban of so-called “high-capacity” magazines. The bill is highly objectionable for several reasons.

Firstly, the legislation is arbitrary and capricious. It is entirely unsupported by substantial evidence. Presumably, the goal of the law would be to limit gun crime, but it cannot be logically concluded that the law would have this effect. After the so-called Assault Weapons Ban was instituted in 1994, which included a ban on magazines holding over 10 rounds, the US Department of Justice assigned a grant to the Urban Institute to study the effects of the ban. They concluded the following:

“...because the banned guns and magazines were never used in more than a fraction of all gun murders, even the maximum theoretically achievable preventative effect of the ban on gun murders is almost certainly too small to detect statistically...”

Unsurprisingly, the Institute concluded that because the so-called “high-capacity” magazines were used in such a tiny fraction of gun crimes, the ban was ineffective.

The arbitrary nature of this bill is evidenced by the magazine size chosen by this legislature. If the Committee chooses to believe, in spite of any empirical evidence, that larger magazines lead to more crime, why not ban magazines larger than eight rounds, or five, or one? This ban would lead our state even farther down the slippery slope of gun control.

Even more grievous, H.B. 1094 is plainly in violation of both the United States Constitution and the Connecticut Constitution. The takings clause in both documents prohibits property being “taken for public use, without just compensation”. This bill certainly contains such a taking. Lines 10-16 require citizens possessing “high-capacity” magazines to either get rid of them, surrender them to the state in 90 days or become Class D felons and face five years in prison or a \$5,000 fine. There is no provision in the bill describing the compensation that citizens will be given for surrendering their property.

I would ask that the members of this Committee consider the gravity of this legislation. This ban is a scheme to restrict the rights of Connecticut gun owners with no legitimate public purpose or factual basis. It requires lawful citizens to dispose of or surrender their private property to the police for no compensation. H.B. 1094 is not only logically and factually defective, but an unwarranted intrusion on the civil rights of Connecticut firearms owners. I request that it be dropped.

Respectfully,

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