



CGA Judiciary Committee

Public Hearing March 23, 2011

Comments Submitted by Susan McCalley, Gun Law Specialist, League of Women Voters of Connecticut

Support For S.B. 1094 AA BANNING LARGE CAPACITY AMMUNITION MAGAZINES

Oppose S.B. 1210 AAC The Use of Deadly Force to Defend the Residents of a Home

My name is Susan McCalley. I am the Gun Law Specialist for the League of Women Voters of Connecticut. On behalf of the League, I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment upon the bills that are before the Committee today.

The LWVCT supports S.B 1094 An Act Banning Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines (LCAMs). The League is in favor of measures to protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. We support S.B. 1094 because it would outlaw the sale and possession of LCAMs in our state, provisions which should have been included in the assault weapons ban that was passed in CT in the 90s, when seven other states DID include this LCAM ban in their assault weapons ban laws. This is unfinished business that will make Connecticut citizens safer from gun violence, which is the goal of the LWVCT gun law position. The LCAM ban was also included in the federal assault weapons ban that was in effect between 1994 and 2004. The effectiveness of such an LCAM ban can be seen in its absence after the federal assault weapons ban was not renewed in 2004. In the following year, states such as Virginia saw a 24% increase in recovered firearms with LCAMs, endangering law enforcement and citizens alike. Detailed evidence for opposition to LCAMs is found in the testimony of Connecticut Against Gun Violence presented here today, which I will not enumerate in the interest of time and redundancy. (Instead, please see CAGV testimony by Ron Pinciario, Executive Director). What is important to remember is that LCAMs increase the lethality of gun violence as we saw in the Manchester workplace shootings here in our state as well as the Tucson shootings in January

this year and many others. Seventy percent of Americans polled just before the 2004 rejection of the renewal of the assault weapons ban favored continuing the ban on LCAMs.

The League opposes S.B. 1210 An Act Concerning the Use of Deadly Physical Force to Defend the Residents of a Home. The League supports the active role of government in preventing violent behavior.

S.B. 1210 would put into state statutes the theory of home defense, which endangers public safety by allowing a homeowner to be the sole judge of any perceived threat to his property. In Connecticut this stands in conflict with our existing law that allows law enforcement, under strict conditions, to remove firearms from individuals who threaten others with violence, whether they are in their homes or elsewhere. This law would endanger state citizens with gun violence, who would be at the whim of homeowners who perceive a threat where none may very well exist. This bill should not become law.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.