

SUPPORT S.B. 61 – An Act Exempting Amateur Radio Operators
SUPPORT S.B. 196 – AAC the Recording Of Pistol And Revolver Sales
SUPPORT H.B. 5245 – AAC the Application Requirements for a Temporary State Permit to Carry

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee,

My name is Kevin Holian-Borgnis. I am current Secretary and a founding member of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League the largest grassroots gun rights organization in the state. I am also a licensed amateur radio operator. I am writing in support of three bills S.B. 61, S.B. 196, and H.B. 5245.

SUPPORT S.B. 61 – An Act Exempting Amateur Radio Operators

As a member of the Ellington Community Emergency Response Team, I was activated to help my town in the Emergency Operations Center during Hurricane Irene. While driving from my home to the town's EOC, I came across several downed power lines. At each of these incidences, I used my mobile amateur radio to notify the Emergency Operations Center of the location of the downed line and other pertinent information. Under current law, I could have been fined for using a mobile electronic device while the vehicle was in motion.

SUPPORT S.B. 196 – AAC the Recording Of Pistol And Revolver Sales

Federal regulations already require that licensed gun dealers retain a bound record book detailing all gun sales they transact. For too long, Connecticut law has required a separate set of records putting undue burden on law abiding Connecticut businesses. This bill eliminating the requirement for a separate bound book and making the federally mandated book available to police is just common sense.

SUPPORT H.B. 5245 – AAC the Application Requirements for a Temporary State Permit to Carry

Connecticut is one of 11 'may-issue' states when it comes to permits/licenses to carry a handguns. This means that there is some requirement beyond a simple background check. In Connecticut, the local issuing authority must determine that a candidate is 'suitable' before a temporary permit to carry can be issued. Nowhere does state law define what makes a candidate 'suitable,' but it does make clear that applicants for a permit to carry use "application forms prescribed by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection."

Since there is no strict mandate from the state defining who is 'suitable' each of the 169 towns and cities in Connecticut gets to determine that for themselves. In doing so, municipalities have added forms, waivers, and other requirements above and beyond what are required by statute. Additional forms include arrest-style description sheets asking for hair-style, piercings and tattoos, and manner of dress among other things. Towns are asking applicants to sign waivers to provide access to credit and dental records; indemnification against civil action in the event that you are fired as a result of

the police talking to your employer about your application.

In 2009, the CCDL requested a declaratory ruling from the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners asking "With respect to a permit to carry a pistol or revolver, is a person unsuitable if he does not supply to the issuing authority upon demand any additional information beyond that required by the standard state application form?" The response was that not submitting additional information above and beyond what is required by the state can not be considered grounds for denial. This concurred with a 1968 attorney general opinion which stated quite plainly that "The clear and obvious intent of the General Assembly was to provide a uniform application for state-wide use by all issuing authorities. The authority to prescribe such a form having been granted to the Commissioner of Public Safety, a municipal police department may not alter, change, or add to the prescribed form no matter how laudable the intent or motive for doing so."

Despite this evidence that the local issuing authorities may not add additional requirements to the application for a temporary permit to carry, towns and cities have been doing so and have been denying applicants their permits based on a failure to complete the requirements above and beyond what is required by state law. With local issuing authorities disregarding vague state law by the local issuing authorities, and a backlog of more than a year for an appeal of a denied application, the due process rights of citizens are being ignored.

House Bill 5245 is a good start on the way to correcting the permitting problems we're seeing at the town level, but it doesn't go far enough. This bill provides a strict mandate on what can be required at the time of application, but doesn't provide any 'teeth' to prevent further abuse. I'm urging you to support House Bill 5245, but I'd encourage you to strengthen the protections provided to applicants.

Thank you for your time,



Kevin Holian-Borgnis
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