

## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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March 22, 2013

To Co-Chairs Senator Harp and Representative Walker, Vice-Chairs Senator Hartley and Representative Flexer, Representative Miller, and Representative O'Brien, Ranking Members Senator Kane, and Representative Miner, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

I would like to express my strong support for S.B. No. 307, AN ACT PROVIDING FUNDING FOR THE STATE-WIDE FIREARMS TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE.

Connecticut has among the toughest gun laws in the country. According to Brady's score, we are ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation and according to the AMA (American Medical Association) study we are 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation. After due deliberations and discussions we all will be looking at the recommendations from the Bipartisan Task Force on Gun Violence Prevention soon. It is one thing to have tough gun laws on the books. It is another thing all together to make sure these gun laws are enforced; otherwise the laws will have no merit at all. I am very concerned that in this tougher gun control climate the illegal trafficking of guns will increase. I wish that was not true, but we cannot be naïve and bury our heads in the sand. We have to be realistic and plan for appropriate implementation.

Established in statue is a state wide Fire Arms Trafficking Task Force pursuant to Section 29-38e. The task force has been charged with 1) reviewing the problem of illegal trafficking in firearms and its impacts 2) identify persons illegally trafficking in firearms and focus resources to prosecute them. 3) track firearms which were sold or disturbed illegally and implement solutions to remove such firearms from persons illegally in possession of them. 4) coordinate its activities with other law enforcement agencies within and outside the state.

According to the office of fiscal analysis in 2008 the task force was staffed with 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants, 6 Detectives, 1 local officer and 1 office assistant. In fiscal year 2012 the task force has been staffed by 1 State Police Detective. In 2012 this one detective made 14 arrests, carried out 30 investigations, made 21 seizures and conducted a gun show inspection. The task force did

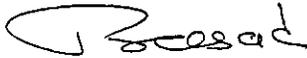
have its own line item in the budget as recently as fiscal year 2009 when \$400,000 was dedicated for this purpose. These funds were allocated for equipment for support of task force operations i.e., vans, vests, and guns and of course personnel. The task force has not received specific allocations of funds since 2009. It has continued to function in accordance with the statutory mandates 29-38e and has been funded by the Department of Emergency Services and Protection (DESPP) and other expense accounts. We need more staffing and the necessary support system.

I am requesting the committee to consider allocating \$1 million for the State-Wide Firearms Trafficking Task Force towards gun traffic control.

I am well aware of our difficult economic times. I am well aware of the difficult choices we have to make in our budget going forward. But at the same time the faces of the twenty-six innocent people will always haunt us, our conscience, and our state. I am fiscally conservative but at the same time we need to do what is right. This proposal is an important first step towards effective implementation of ridding our towns and cities of illegal possessed firearms in the hands of dangerous people.

I urge you to support this piece of legislation. I thank the committee for their time and attention into this matter, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,



Prasad Srinivasan  
State Representative  
31<sup>st</sup> Assembly District