

March 19, 2013

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee,

My name is Kyle Gless and I am a homeowner in the City of Norwich. I am here to voice my opposition to Bill 6656. After growing up without firearms I finally got my license to carry a pistol a couple years ago. I wanted to be able to protect myself and my family in case anything ever happens. I went the pistol route first because between fees, background checks, and a firearms safety course it costs over \$300 before I can even buy a pistol and train with it. I have made quite an investment in my family's safety but my wife and I both really enjoy going to the range and it has become another hobby for us.

This bill will do absolutely nothing to reduce gun violence in Connecticut. I spent time looking over this bill and have yet to find any rationale as to how it would curb violence. It appears to me that it is an attempt to reduce legal gun ownership or to price people out of getting a firearm. This insurance would help pay for damages if an accident happens, like at Manchester Community College, where an officer 2 weeks ago shot another officer in the foot. But I believe that they are relatively low instances of firearms accidents. Just look at the student the police found carrying that day at MCC, he probably carries a firearm everyday and has yet to negligently shoot anyone.

There are many people in Connecticut who may not make very much money but own a firearm for defense in their home. So for somebody who saves up and spends \$300 on a lower end shotgun and takes it out a couple times a year to stay comfortable with it, the cost of yearly ownership has skyrocketed due to ridiculous mandatory insurance. Insurance that won't likely provide coverage if this firearms owner purposely breaks the law. Insurance that nobody is guaranteed to provide, but is required in order to exercise your right to own a firearm for your defense.

While many of our police are required to spend 3 hours per year at the shooting range, I choose to spend that time each month at the range. We will say I shoot about 300 rounds per month, I'm sure many people shoot more and many shoot less than I do. So each month I spend \$75 or \$900 per year on ammo. Take \$300 out of that equation

for insurance (let's not count the registration and any increased permit fees) and my budget has been cut 33%.

So now myself and many of the over 180,000 permit holders are still out there carrying a firearm in public, every day, but have had our training budget reduced. So we want to train to safely own and operate a firearm, yet will have less money to do so and insurance to help incur the cost if I unintentionally shoot someone. So fiscal responsibility is being taken from the firearms owner, it's almost like saying owning insurance for a vehicle forces people to drive safer (I believe the opposite is true). This doesn't sound to me like it will make anyone safer or reduce gun violence.

I fail to see how this will stop a mass murderer or prevent any of the horrible violence that is going on in our Connecticut cities. Trying to make it cost prohibitive to own a firearm through mandatory insurance will not stop a madman.

If Matthew Chew had been armed in New London 2 and ½ years ago, he might be alive today instead of being stabbed to death by some bored punk kids. Not saying he wanted a firearm, but it is a choice that law abiding citizens have the right to make. There are many good, hard working people in our state who deserve to be able to protect themselves, who won't have the deep pockets necessary to own a firearm in a Connecticut.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle W Gless', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyle W Gless

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Norwich, CT