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Against SB 6656

I am a Fire Commissioner, a Member of a Volunteer Fire Dept. and a volunteer ambulance corps—I'm an emergency first responder. I am also a professional firearms safety educator, certified by the NRA and the Massachusetts State Police to teach gun safety. It appalls me to see attempts to curtail gun rights being mislabeled "gun safety." None of these bills, including **SB 6656**, will do a thing to promote safety. Many of the proponents of such bills have been waiting for decades for a perfect storm like Newtown to exploit and politicize, and they have pounced eagerly on this tragedy as a golden opportunity to push victim disarmament.

SB 6656 is a ridiculous ripoff and is totally unnecessary. No state that I know of has a gun liability insurance law to date. Since 2003, almost two dozen such bills have been rejected nationwide. Law abiding gun owners are not the problem, and punishing them will not make anyone safer. This is *nothing at all* like requiring car insurance; cars are a privilege, not a constitutionally guaranteed right. And unlike motor vehicle accidents, which are quite common, gun incidents involving lawful owners are exceedingly rare; maybe if we could require criminals to carry insurance to indemnify their victims I would support that. This is more like a poll tax, a form of discrimination that forces people to pay for exercising a civil right, and it punishes the poor disproportionately. Bypassing the difficult process for confiscating guns by making them illegal, it regressively disarms people by making it cost prohibitive. And information gathered by insurance companies can also be used by the state as a form of back-door gun registration, the precursor to eventual confiscation. This bill is first and foremost a political statement, once again attempting to stigmatize lawful gun owners.

Although a state might be able to unconstitutionally force people to buy insurance, it cannot compel insurers to sell it, let alone to offer it at rates that are not confiscatory—and the state might wind up in the position of having to set up its own insurance pool.

I am disgusted and in fact offended that *once again* I need to come here and push back against still another poorly-considered bill, although I am impressed at the talent and agility it takes to simultaneously slap us in the face, stab us in the back, kick us in the backside, drag us through the mud, and hoist the central digit at us, all while picking our pockets.

We need to enforce the thousands of laws already on the books, not enact new laws that will punish law-abiding citizens for the crimes of one hateful madman. And for heaven's sake, do *not* enact new legislation hastily without waiting to see the State Police's official report (including toxicology)! I promise those of you who do will not be re-elected.

