

Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee,

My name is E. Jonathan Hardy. Email: jonathan@ctgunsafety.com
Resident of New Britain, CT, firearms instructor and executive board member of the CT Citizens Defense League

I'm writing in opposition to the following bills proposed today:

S.B. No. 505 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING THE MINIMUM AGE TO PURCHASE A RIFLE OR OTHER LONG GUN.

This bill does not take into effect hunting issues. At 18, we declare someone to be an adult. Why should they not be able to purchase a long gun? Hunting is a valued tradition and we shouldn't passively dismiss the value it has for our youth.

This bill also fails to take into account that not all long arm purchases are by an individual. If a gun club purchases a firearm for club use, I see no provisions.

S.B. No. 506 (COMM) AN ACT REQUIRING CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR ALL PRIVATE FIREARM SALES.

This bill seems to be one of those pieces of legislation that screams "WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!". Where has not having a bill like this been used? The crime that brings us to this testimony was committed with stolen firearms. This law, would have done nothing. And since we average 1 long arm death a year (and mostly illegal) with the hundreds of thousands of laws we have, this really is a non-issue.

This is another cash cow for the state. If we can't stop them from buying arms, let's just make it less affordable. This is simply unacceptable.

S.B. No. 897 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING REGULATION OF FIREARMS.

Two provisions of this bill make it practically useless.

1. We already have laws regarding intoxication and firearms. We're talking .02 difference in this legislation. In all my legal research, I still haven't found that one case where .02 of a difference would have resulted in another criminal charge. If someone is inebriated we already have a statute to deal with this.

2. This bill forces the seller to add their date of birth to the bill of sale. That not only isn't required (a background check is already done when the firearm is sold and called in to the Department of Public Safety) but poses a severe identity theft issue. Documents with name, address, date of birth, etc are a boon to identify thieves and serves NO purpose in this bill.

S.B. No. 1076 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REDUCTION OF GUN VIOLENCE.

The biggest bill here, and has NOTHING to do with reducing gun violence. I'm not going to write a book on this bill, but I have several concerns, notably:

- No provisions in 1076 or similar bills with registrations for firearms that are not owned by individuals. Many gun clubs own firearms for use in youth sports and various other activities.
- There are no provisions for non-resident hunting licenses and registration. The current language can make an out of state hunter visiting CT a potential criminal. How many of us may go hunting with friends and relatives when they visit?
- How will out of state hunters and residents that come to this state for firearms related activities be able to purchase ammunition? If they don't have a firearm registered in the state (under these bills) they have no means to purchase ammunition? Take a quick look at the license plates at Cabela's. Plenty of non-Connecticut plates in the lot. Doesn't Connecticut want the revenue?
- Freedom of Information Act provisions. The current proposal has NO protection for citizens with a long arm permit or ammunition card. Pistol permits are exempt from FOIA requests. Do we really want to give criminals a shopping list of "whose house to hit"?
- All provisions for several types of ID's for purchasing arms, ammunition and such are designed to prevent law abiding citizens from procuring ammunition. The components portion is really dangerous as it prevents reloaders from picking up spent brass at a range. To make that crime is insane. Not many gangs I've heard reported have a dedicated reloading specialist on staff.
- Most of this bill is designed to make affording a gun unaffordable. This troubles me because of the genuineness of the provisions. Especially given the vast economical and racial demographics in the state. Why should a poor

or minority law abiding citizen be barred from a civil right while a wealthy white suburban citizen can? Do we want to value one race or demographic over another? This bill does EXACTLY that!

- This bill is designed to make America's most popular sporting rifle inaccessible to citizens of this state. AR-15 and similar rifles are not a threat. Persons purchasing them already have to go through several background checks in order to make the purchase. Adding a feature to the list only makes it more difficult for citizens to use a widely available rifle (as has been protected by the supreme court).
- Magazine limits are of little use when the rest of the nation has access to them. They aren't serial numbered and our own state constitution has provisions regarding making something illegal and then taking possession of that item. It simply is not legal.
- The overall premise of this bill is to make law abiding citizens into criminals..... sorry, let me correct that. statement. Law abiding VOTING citizens. There will be revolt if this passes. 180,000 plus permit holders and that's not even counting long guns owned by citizens without a permit.
- Mental health issues. I applaud the approach to mental health issues in this debate. The way it is related here in this legislation does nothing to prevent crime or the tragedy of Sandy Hook. It is only being used here as a method to deter someone from filing for a permit. I attend the firearms board hearings, I've already heard too much abuse on this provision alone.
- There are too many scary provisions here that separate the classes of state employees and the general public. Why should a DMV employee get more benefits than a non DMV employee. Look at the provisions under "Body Armor". While we're at it, why is it that a normal citizen shouldn't have body armor? I sure don't see the justification for that in the evening news.

There are many, many more..... this is just a tip of the iceberg. 59 pages of proposed legislation that will do NOTHING to prevent what happened in Newtown. This needs to be scrapped entirely.

H.B. No. 6162 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING INELIGIBILITY FOR A PERMIT TO CARRY A PISTOL OR REVOLVER OR AN ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATE BASED ON A PRIOR HOSPITALIZATION.

My biggest issue here is there needs to be a better method of reform. It seems too easy for someone to get a labeled based on prior hospitalization, but not a clear process to be found mentally sound.

H.B. No. 6251 (COMM) AN ACT REQUIRING FINGERPRINTING AND CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS PRIOR TO THE SALE, DELIVERY OR TRANSFER OF ALL LONG GUNS.

This is another cash cow/red herring. Background checks can already be provided by B.I.D.S. The Blind Identification Database System can be used and protects citizens rights and ensures that the purchaser of a firearm isn't a criminal. This system is secure, protects citizen rights and costs next to anything. I can be available to address the committee on this program if requested.

H.B. No. 6595 (RAISED) AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS NEAR PRIVATE RESIDENCES.

This doesn't need to be a state law, it simply is best handled by individual ordinances. Once we get involved in town matters of this nature, it never stops and every year we will be back again asking to make or defend modifications. It really hasn't been an issue to the vast majority of citizens.

H.B. No. 6598 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC PROTECTION.

This bill is not only not needed, it is SCARY. It makes provisions for law enforcement to get permission from a judge to seize weapons and the process for keeping or destroying them. We have enough laws on this part.

The destruction of these arms is what also bothers me. There have been several cases where citizens have had arms destroyed by law enforcement after being told by a judge NOT to destroy them. Why are we allowing law enforcement to bypass a judge, by statute, and allow such destruction of private property? Keep the current system in place. Let's not reward bad behavior by granting more powers to those that have abused them in the past.

Bottom line:

If we are going to be serious about reducing risk, let's not take the easy way out. Many of these bills are not new and have been introduced in the past. Rather than dredging up ideologically driven proposed legislation that will have no effect on crime, let's look at the real issues: School safety and mental health.