

Testimony submitted for the March 14th public comment session to review CT gun control Legislation

Dear CT Legislators,

I strongly oppose the majority of the proposed bills we are discussing today, on the grounds that they are rushed, not fully vetted, and are completely unconstitutional. They appear to have been developed as “people control” measures to punish lawful firearm ownership. They will have no impact on a criminal’s access to guns. These are not “common sense” measures, they are political sounding boards for ambitious politicians eager to capitalize on the heinous acts of a mentally deranged individual.

These bills are knee-jerk reactions that lay out a blueprint for disarming our state’s citizens.

S.B. No. 505 raises the minimum age limit for firearms purchase from 18 to 21.

18 years is old enough to join the army, train with weapons , fight and die for our country, but not old enough to purchase a firearm for lawful use, including self-protection. That makes no sense.

S.B. No. 1076 has so many problematic aspects that I will run out of my time limit just trying to list them all. This bill is laced with hidden traps and multiple onerous provisions aimed not at preventing crime, but to trap and encumber law-abiding citizens trying to exercise their Constitutional rights.

Clearly this bill was introduced solely to punish firearm ownership and attempt to make owning, registering, and updating firearms-related registrations **SO CUMBERSOME** as to discourage it altogether.

Expanding the definition of an assault weapon.: The US Supreme Court has upheld the right to own firearms that are in common use. Semi-automatic firearms including the AR-15 and its standard magazine are among the most common firearms in use today; The US Dept of Homeland Security cites the AR-15 (with its standard 30-round magazine) as an appropriate choice for home and personal defense. Therefore CT’s proposal to ban semiautomatics by unlawfully redefining them as assault weapons is invalid, and unconstitutional.

This proposed law provides *exemptions* for many State groups, but not for the general public. Is the CT legislature saying that one person’s life is worth a higher level of protection than another’s? That is, by definition, a discriminatory practice and a clear civil rights violation.

The right to bear arms was originally written with military weapons in mind, as militias of that time period relied on an individual’s personal weapons. The AR-15 is by definition a civilian variant of a military rifle, and is not an assault rifle.

Citizens have the right to exactly the same protections that the police use to protect themselves, including the same fire arms, ammunition, and even body armor if they so choose.

Citizens need to have the right to allow themselves the appropriate opportunities for how they train and become proficient with firearms, including how they purchase and manage ammunition. Infringing on those rights by limiting access to ammunition is clearly a violation of the second amendment rights.

Limiting magazine capacity is problematic in that it makes no provision for grandfathering the millions of magazines already in existence, nor does it make any provision for compensating the owners for giving these up. Who among you is poised to explain why a 10 round limit was chosen? Will that deter an attack of several determined home invaders? Last week CT police were involved in a shootout, shooting 41 rounds with only 6 hits. That means the supposedly trained police are hitting an average of 1 out of every six shots. Therefore, using CT's own example if there are two home invaders, 10 rounds from an untrained citizen will not be enough to deter the attack.

S.B. 1076 is a complex web of rifle permits, pistol permits, individual firearms registration, ammunition registration, annual renewals with no grace period, exorbitant fees, transfer limitations, travel restrictions, arbitrary review and approval criteria, fingerprinting, Blood and DNA analysis, extended delays in approvals, arbitrary mental health approval criteria, a monthly limit of one firearm purchase per month, registration of ammunition purchasers, ammunition registry, restrictions on internet ammunition purchases, and lastly, confiscation of firearms on the mere suspicion that a citizen has violated one of the many thousands of facets of this draconian law.

Can you honestly look CT citizens in the eye and say that with this proposed law, you are following the basic precepts of the US constitution? That you are preserving the rights of self-protection, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? The Second amendment was developed to prevent a tyrannical government from disarming a free people. Yet this bill is attempting to do just that, with a quagmire of red tape and unreasonable, arbitrary, and unconstitutional legislation.

In closing, the Second amendment states that "the right to bear arms shall not be infringed" and counts on a well-regulated (defined as *well trained*, per constitutional scholars) militia to preserve a free state. The state is the people, not the government.

S.B. 1076 SIGNIFICANTLY infringes on the rights to bear arms and is therefore in violation of both the US Constitutions and CT state constitutions.

This series of laws would have done nothing to prevent the Newtown tragedy. I ask the CT legislators to not approve S.B. No 1076 due to its unreasonable, arbitrary, costly, and unconstitutional provisions.

I also oppose S.B. No.'s 505, 506, 897, and H.B.'s 6162, 6251, 6595, and 6598 as these measures are already accounted for in current legislation, and these extra provisions only serve to create significant barriers and impediments to lawful firearms users. These appear to have been drafted solely for political gain and should not become law.

Finally, I leave you with one important question:

As legislation is being drafted, the specific facts of the Newtown crime are being hidden from the public.
WHY?

Respectfully,

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