

James J Crook

Coalition of Connecticut Sportsmen

March 14, 2014

Public Safety and Security Committee

Opposed to Committee Bill No. 505 An Act Concerning the Minimum Age to Purchase a Rifle or Other Long gun (See Below)

Opposed to S.B. No. 897 An Act Concerning the Regulation of Firearms

-Registration of all firearms

Opposed to S.B. No. 1076 An Act Concerning the Reduction of Gun Violence

-Arbitrary ban on certain firearms based on Cosmetics, Long Gun Permit will make owning cost prohibitive, Separate registration for each firearm with fee to be determined in the future, One gun a month makes collecting impossible

Opposed to Committee Bill No. 6251 An Act Requiring Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Checks Prior to the Sale, Delivery or Transfer of all Long Guns.

-Makes ownership cost prohibitive, National Instant Criminal Background Check is enough

Opposed to H.B. No. 6595 An Act Prohibiting the Discharge of Firearms Near Private Residences.

-violates private property rights

Opposed to H.B. No. 6598 An Act Concerning Public Protection

-Too vague, includes all school activities on or off property

Good Morning Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, and other distinguished members of the Committee. My name is James Crook. I am here today opposed to several bills, however the three minute time constraint required that I pick one.

I'm not here today for myself. I'm here for the young hunters, target shooters and future gun owners of the state. I've been hunting since I turned 12 years old. I used a 20 gauge shotgun that my father purchased for me yet I didn't own till I turned 18. He had to supervise my hunting activities for six years before I was able to hunt alone. I learned much and we had some great times. I will cherish those memories for the rest of my life. I still love to hunt with my father whenever we get the chance. I hope to one day share the same experiences with my own children. During that time I was also a Boy Scout. Every summer at camp, I spent my days shooting 22 caliber rifles, fishing and sailing. I couldn't wait to buy my first rifle so that I could go to the range and shoot any time I wanted.

After the six years of supervised hunting experience, I was ready to conquer the woods and water with my shotgun on my own. I was also an adult. By law I was responsible enough to vote, go to war, build or destroy my credit, smoke cigarettes and walk into a gentleman's club. None of these did I have any experience in. I also had to take responsibility for all my actions.

Those who say they champion the second amendment and respect the hunting tradition should not vote for this bill. The age restriction denies adults the ability to protect themselves and their home. The three year swing in age also greatly reduces their opportunities to hunt when and where they want, because they will have to be supervised by a licensed adult. I mean someone who is over 21. It will also increase the cost for anyone wanting to target shoot. Not only will they be required to purchase range time, but they will be forced to rent a firearm and purchase ammunition from the range.

These extra requirements will discourage most from continuing their outdoor sporting traditions. People in this age group already are absent from the outdoor sports. DEEP had suggested lowering the cost of conservation licenses for this group to encourage them to stay. It will also leave them deprived of their rights as adults. Making the minimum age to own all guns 21 years of age is in fact a complete ban on firearms for the first three years of a person's adult life.