

## Testimony - Proposed Gun Laws March 10, 2013

"Every citizen has the right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state". Very simple, very direct. The Connecticut Constitution.

The US Dept of Justice's latest report - January this year - concluded that virtually all of this type of gun control is "largely ineffective".

US v Miller (1939) found that military type weapons are the ones intended under the 2nd amendment for private ownership and proper for militia/military purposes. That means for each one of us. And directly implies that "assault type weapons" are in fact ok.

The Supreme Court Heller case recently added still more to individual gun owners' rights.

The latest Harvard Journal of Law study found that even banning firearms would not reduce murder or suicide, and that fewer guns equals more crime. They found that the European countries with the most stringent gun controls have the highest murder rates. (So does Chicago.)

There is no factual documentation that shows anything in any of these bills has supporting evidence or history of stopping gun crime. None.

The cost? These bills will siphon dozens to hundreds of millions out of the economy and possibly cost thousands of jobs as manufacturers and their suppliers move out. Unfortunately this does not seem to matter to many of our political leaders.

S.505 Minimum age 21 to buy a gun. Consider this: The country sends 18 and 19 year olds to fight, get maimed for life, and die on the battlefield, and to use every kind of weapon. Yet this state says when they come home, if they do, they cannot buy a .22 rifle?

S.506 Criminal Background Checks for All Private Firearms Sales: Amounts to universal gun registration, universal owner licensing and another huge government database. It is very costly, individually complicated and time consuming, and subject to hacking and release to the public. This bill serves no purpose except to harass and intimidate gun honest gun owners. There is no evidence that it works to reduce crime in any way and only serves to precede further restrictions on honest gun owners.

S.710 Local Permits for Gun Shows. Too much local oversight and subject to many police and political whims that can effectively sabotage the gun show even at the last minute. There should be just one statewide standard and simply local notification.

H.6251 Fingerprinting and Background Check for long gun sales: Another universal gun registration and owner identification scheme that identifies every legal gun owner for harassment, delays, further restrictions, more costs, and even release for media publication. No evidence that it works anywhere to reduce crime. Just the opposite.

S.1076 Reduction in Gun Violence. The most egregious assault on private gun ownership imaginable. It goes beyond universal gun registration, universal owner identification and control, renders guns that were perfectly legal for the last 20 years now illegal for no good reason, makes guns illegal for nothing more than cosmetic features that make them "look scary", will outlaw thousands of guns that cannot fit the new definition of acceptable, provides no compensation for resulting millions of dollars in losses, adds potentially thousands of dollars to individual owner costs and subjects gun owners to incredibly onerous, costly, and complicated licensing and permit processes every year for every single gun. Further, it ignores the Supreme Court Miller decision that recognizes military type weapons as the very ones referred to in the Second Amendment. And it makes a mockery of the very specific right to individual gun ownership in our state constitution. In the end, it serves no purpose to reduce crime in any way. History and experience all over the world prove just the opposite. S.1076 is a travesty that should never have been even considered.

Lanza never needed the rifle. He could have done the same damage with one of the pistols he carried and 2 extra 10 round magazines. And remember, he killed the gun owner and stole the guns. None of these bills would have even slowed him down. This assault rifle hysteria is groundless. the AR15 is probably the most popular gun platform available in this country. Thousands of honest people own them just in this state. Safely.

There is no apparent history of "assault type weapons" having any widespread use in crime. Studies after the Virginia Tech shooting concluded that high cap magazines likely had little if any effect on the crime. What is the basis to act? Why the rush? Where is the police report? There is too much conflicting information and lack of specifics to make a rational judgment. There are questions about whether the rifle was even used and what caliber it was.

Has the Office of Legislative Research analyzed the effect of the "assault weapons" ban to see if expanding it, or even keeping it, makes any sense? Or if there is any national research that supports any further restrictions on legal gun ownership? OLR inclusion should be required. This takes time if you are to do it right.

Maybe the smartest thing to do is to do nothing until you have the facts and time to deliberate on them. And if it takes until the next session, have the courage to do so.

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