

CCDL, Inc.
PO Box 642
Groton, CT 06340
www.ccdl.us

Connecticut Citizens Defense League, Inc.

Members of the Public Safety Committee:

My name is Virginia Benedetto, and I am a resident of Stratford, CT. I oppose bills SB1076 and SB505.

I grew up in TN. My father owned a couple of rifles and shotguns, and at least one handgun. I remember him taking us down to the river and teaching us how to be safe with a gun, how to shoot the gun, and explaining to my mother what she had to do if anyone ever came into our home wanting to do harm to our family. It was taught to us that guns are dangerous when used improperly, and there are no mistakes. We only used them if we were practicing, hunting, or if someone was trying to use lethal force against us. This is not being paranoid, this is being prepared.

I completed high school with honors, and I have a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science. I eventually found my way to Connecticut, and met the man I married, and also fell in love with this state.

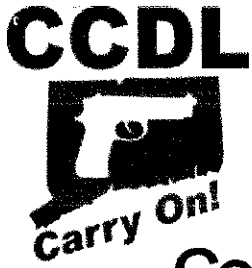
My husband owned a few guns when we married, and within a year or so we were going to the range, something I had not done since my teen years in TN. It felt good. Then we realized legislators and town officials were trying to overstep boundaries of average citizens when they wanted to impose restrictions on who could carry a gun, or where they were allowed to carry that gun. At that time, we were not sure what we could do, but knew someone had to do something. After finding some like minded individuals on an internet forum, an organization was formed. We formed the Connecticut Citizens Defense League, better known as the CCDL. This makes our fourth year, and we have been doing a good job helping citizens know their rights, express their views to legislators, and fend off overreaching bills that would infringe our rights. Since December 14, 2012, our organization has doubled in size, because people see what is happening here in our very own state. A mentally disturbed individual has wreaked havoc on everyone's world, and people want to feel better, blame something, and feel like they have done something, even if that means restricting the rights of their neighbors.

We are all heart broken about what happened in Newtown. But don't think that we agree with the people that say we need more restrictions. If the majority of Connecticut agreed that we need tougher gun laws, why is our organization growing DAILY, doubling in size having over 4000 members now, and growing by the day how we used to grow by the month. Why is the number of carry permits applications up, and why are the shelves on gun shops across the state empty? This is not the "fringe of the fringe" as our Governor stated after 3000 of us showed up for a Lobby Day on Monday, March 11. These are not gun nuts, or crazies as people want to make us out to be. Most of us are hard working, tax paying, voting, average every day American citizens. We do not love our guns, but we love our life, country, and liberty.

I beg of you to reconsider your positions on these bills that will restrict most law abiding citizens, or

**Every citizen has a right
to bear arms in defense
of himself and the state.**

Connecticut State Constitution, Article First, Section 15



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make it near impossible for us to protect ourselves and our families in the event we ever need to. I have heard so many people say "we must do something now", and "if we save one life". What about my life? What about the lives of the thousands of gun owners that use their gun in a defensive situation daily? Do we not deserve to "feel good" as well? Why should our rights be stripped? Should we not be able to protect ourselves and our families? Our "gun" culture is that we take care of ourselves, we do not expect others to do that. The fact is that evil exist in this world, and no amount of feel good legislation is going to get rid of that.

I **oppose** these bills:

SB1076 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REDUCTION OF GUN VIOLENCE - The only thing this will reduce is the citizens' wallets after they try to register and obtain permits and buy expensive ammo because they can no longer find sales from a competitive market. It will also reduce the amount of tax dollars that the state retains after people move out of this state to somewhere that is more friendly to our culture.

SB505 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MINIMUM AGE TO PURCHASE A RIFLE OR OTHER LONG GUN - This is absolutely an infringement on young adults, especially those that have served in the military and are old enough to die for our country while using weapons possibly even more powerful than the ones available to the public. If they return home before turning 21 are not be able to own a rifle.

Thank you for the opportunity to hear my story,
Virginia Benedetto
Technology Coordinator
CCDL

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