

Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee,

My Name is Heather Duffy. I am a life long resident of New Britain, CT.

I am writing to tell you of my severe opposition to bill **S.B.1076** as well as any laws that infringe on the rights of any US citizen to bear arms and be free as the founders of this great nation fought so hard to earn for us. As stated above, I was born and raised in New Britain and currently live there in with my husband and two and a half (one is on the way) children. I would like to give you a bit of my history so that perhaps you may better understand my perspective.

Growing up in an inner city, guns were only ever mentioned in a few ways. BB guns that my father would tell us stories about using when he was young, being 'boys' as only boys of the 50's could be; weapons used by officers of war and local authority (police) to protect and serve; and lastly, horrible incidents such as the drive-by shooting of Miguel DeJesus in front of NBHS in '94.

Guns were something that while I feared over all, I did not really understand. I met my husband my sophomore year of college. While he had been born in Norwalk, CT, when he was young his family moved to Lancaster County in PA. Growing up for him had been a drastic difference from my experience. There they were taught gun safety in school, and their school was even closed for the first day of deer season, as hunting was so much a part of the culture there. When we moved in together, it took many long conversations to make me comfortable with him having any sort of firearms. I had no knowledge save my father's stories, and the media. Very little is ever spoken of weaponry in our schools. Thankfully he was very patient with me and answered my multitudes of questions and showed me first hand basic do's and don'ts of arms handling.

For the first time in my life, I had a basic knowledge of this weapon I had grown to fear...

My father has taught me many things in my life. He is my mentor and guide. One of his greatest lessons to me has been to not judge another or anything for that matter, without having first hand experience and decent knowledge on the topic or situation in question. Many of you have heard the saying "The only thing to fear is fear itself." Oh how very true. How many of you have been to the range? Held a gun? Loaded a gun? I have. It is no longer frightening to me. How silly of me all these years to fear an inanimate object. For it is not the object, but the person wielding that object that is the concern. In their minds alone can we hope to find the solution to this problem. A gun cannot shoot someone alone. A knife cannot stab, a car cannot hit and run, a box cutter cannot bring down an airplane.

I beg of you, listen to the voice of reason and logic in your head and heart. People with a mind to do evil will find a way. But if we are left defenseless, *they* will be the only ones left. If criminals followed the law, is it not true that there would *be no criminals*? If any of you are parents, or simply have known love in your life, think of this: in a life or death situation, what *wouldn't* you give to protect the one you love? What would you do if you had nothing but yourself to protect them? How would you feel if you were left powerless to stop them, powerless by the very government that was placed in this great nation to serve us and uphold our freedoms? I cannot be a victim, nor will I allow my children to be. Allow me the right to protect my family. If you should choose not to carry a firearm, or any other means of protection, that is naturally your choice. That is as it should be. YOUR CHOICE. YOUR RIGHT. YOUR FREEDOM. Please vote NO to S.B. 1076 and YES to our freedoms. Thank you for taking the time to read this. Please listen with your heart to a mother who cannot stand the thought of leaving her children to a world unprotected.

Sincerely,

Heather Duffy

8609657714

aeternaignis@yahoo.com