

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2013**

My name is John Chunis. I am a resident of Rocky Hill CT. I am here today to offer testimony on several proposed Bills.

S.B. 506 – An Act Requiring Criminal Background Checks for all Private Firearm Sales

In section (a) [page 1] the provision requiring the transferor to retain the application form and sales documentation for 20 years is unrealistic for private individuals. Also, in section (c) [page 2] the transferor is required to retain to sales receipt for 5 years, which is also unrealistic for private individuals. These documents have to be sent to government agencies by the transferor at the time of sale, which should be sufficient for private sales.

This problem also exists in SB 1076 and HB 6251.

Once a private individual sells a gun, he should be done with it. Many past gun owners may be in nursing homes with Alzheimer's disease, or something else, within the 20 year timeframe and as currently written, will be subject to prosecution if they don't take the documents with them. This would be absurd. Therefore this requirement should be deleted for private sales.

S.B. 1076 – An Act Concerning the Reduction of Gun Violence.

I disagree with several aspects of this Bill.

I do agree, however, with the statement I heard last week by the Co-Chairman of the Gun Violence Task Force that it is the person and not the gun that commits the crime. Just as it is the person and not the car that is responsible for drunk driving accidents. According to the NHTSA we kill over 10,000 people a year due to drunk drivers in the US and there is no hype about banning cars.

Also how hypocritical it is for the State of Connecticut to ban the future sale and ownership of AR-15 style semi-automatic rifles by citizens of CT, but still allow the manufacture of these firearms for sale to people in other states. Do we value the tax dollars and jobs these manufacturers provide us more than the lives of the citizens of other states? That would be very disgraceful. If we do not consider these firearms so dangerous for citizens of other states to also not ban their manufacture in CT, then we shouldn't consider them dangerous for CT citizens to own either. Therefore,

- 1) The "Assault Weapon" definitions currently in the CT Statutes should not be redefined [subsection (5) on pages 3 and 4] or,
- 2) If this is mandated, then the future sale of so re-defined "assault weapons" should still be permitted [Section (2) page 5] to private individuals in CT as long as a certificate of possession is obtained by the future buyer, as currently proposed for existing AR-15 owners.

No prohibition on AR-15 style semi-automatic rifles is made to the police force. Since these firearms are not “dangerous and unusual”, and are “in common use at the time”, as there are well over a million of them legally in private hands in the US, prohibiting these arms from private citizens in CT would therefore be a violation of the 2nd amendment. [per the principles of Heller vs DC - 2008].

Furthermore:

3) New section (35) item (b)(4) [page 52] has a requirement to provide one’s social security number for a firearm registration application. The information in the next section (5) for motor vehicle operator’s license or government issued ID card is sufficient. We don’t need our SS numbers floating around in another uncontrolled database. Also SS numbers do not identify the citizenship of the person. Therefore it provides no useful purpose.

4) New Section (35) item (c) [page 54] states that the department may charge a fee to cover the administrative costs of the registration of each firearm. Any cost for this purpose needs to be specified in the Statute and not left up to the whims of subordinate state departments.

5) This bill also has the 20 year and 5 year document retention requirement [page 13] for private sales as with SB 506 and HB 6251 discussed above. This should be eliminated.

H.B. 6251 – An Act Requiring Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Checks Prior to the Sale, Delivery or Transfer of All Long Guns.

Same 20 year and 5 year document retention problem in section (a) [page 1] and (c) [page 2-3] as with SB 506 for private sales.

Section (d) [page 3] should also include a similar exclusion for sales to parents, children and grandchildren as currently proposed in SB 506.

H.B. 6595 – An Act Prohibiting the discharge of Firearms near Private Residences.

This bill should have an exception for situations involving self-defense. For instance, if 2 ex-cons break into my home at 3 am in the morning and try to rape and kill my wife and 2 daughters, I should not be required to get the permission of my neighbors before discharging my firearm to protect my wife, children and myself.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on these proposed bills and thank you for your time.