

Opposed to SB1076

My name is Kevin Fleming, I am a police Sergeant, a lifelong CT resident and I am here to speak in opposition to SB1076. This bill does nothing to promote public safety and is clearly written in order to punish law abiding gun owners as if we are somehow responsible for the murders at Sandy Hook.

Changing the definition of an assault weapon from 2 characteristics to 1 does not address any public safety issue at all. All it does is tell the public that the state isn't willing to make hard changes, like improving mental health services, so we are just going to tell people that they can't have a pistol grip on their rifle and that will solve everything. The key to solving this problem is not the type of gun or what it looks like, it is limiting criminals, the mentally unstable and other prohibited persons from access in the first place. In Connecticut and the rest of the US a person has a better chance of being hit by lightning than they do of being shot by a rifle. If you want to mandate something try starting with mandating that prosecutors actually prosecute violent criminals instead of dismissing charges as fast as they can, which any officer in the state can attest to.

The mandatory and yearly registration of every firearm is an unnecessary burden on both the citizen and the state and will not increase public safety in any way. The state already has a record of all handguns sold both at retail and privately and of all rifles sold at retail. Assuming the state passes a universal background check law they will then have an accounting of every single gun sold at both the retail and private level. Furthermore, there are already systems in place through the State Police Firearms Unit to alert both the gun owner and the local police if a person becomes ineligible to own a firearm due to an arrest, issuance of a protective order ect. Mandating re-registration of already registered guns is completely unnecessary and quite expensive. The SPFU is currently backlogged by 90,000 firearms transactions and the state would be more than duplicating, every year single year, a work load that it already can't keep up with. This was already tried in Canada when they mandated the registration of existing firearm in 1993. The bills writers promised it would cost 2 million dollars per year. That quickly skyrocketed to over 60 million dollars a year and the law and the registry was abandoned in 2012 after what the Canadian Government called "a waste of over 2 billion dollars" and no measurable change in the firearm related crime rate.

One of the reasons I own firearms is to teach my children responsibility. Not only responsible gun ownership, but the value of living responsibly day to day so that they can continue to enjoy the freedoms our founding father fought for. If this bill becomes law I will be unable to pass my guns down to my children when I am gone. My sporting rifles that I hunt with will be either sold out of state or destroyed instead of being the family heirlooms I intend them to be. I, and you, will have taught my children that in Connecticut we punish good people for the crimes of others and that living in a responsible manner does not matter because the state treats us all like criminals anyways.

Enforce the current laws and remember, there are an estimated 560,000 gun owners in this state, we aren't all Republicans, and we vote. Thank you.

Kevin Fleming, Barkhamsted