

Testimony for Public Hearing
Public Safety & Security Committee
March 14, 2013

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Terryville, CT

OPPOSE: Raised S.B. No. 1076 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE REDUCTION OF GUN VIOLENCE

Honorable Members of the Public Safety & Security Committee,

I am a citizen of Connecticut, residing here for over 35 years, and a parent of two children. I would like to express my sincere **opposition** to SB1076. This proposal will not reduce instances of violence as its title suggests. Rather, it will only serve to disarm the good citizens of CT and turn thousands of productive, peaceable people into felons. I oppose universal registration, restrictions on the purchase of ammunition, arbitrary bans on certain semi-automatic firearms, additional permitting requirements and fees (taxes), and all the other onerous aspects of the bill as well.

Please consider a few of the following points:

- **Universal Firearm Registration** – Canada has tried it and has proven it does not work. The cost was more than 1,646% of the original projected cost.¹ In 2002, Canada's auditor general released a report saying initial cost estimates of \$2 million (Canadian) had increased to \$1 billion as the government tried to register the estimated 15 million guns owned by Canada's 34 million residents. "The gun registry caused law abiding citizens to register their guns but it did nothing to take one illegal gun off the street..." according to Al Koenig, President, Calgary Police Association.² "We have an ongoing gun crisis, including firearms-related homicides lately in Toronto, and a law registering firearms has neither deterred these crimes nor helped us solve any of them," according to Toronto police Chief Julian Fantino.³ This costly endeavor was an outright failure!
- **Semi-automatic gun bans** – Expanding the list of banned firearms based upon a different set of cosmetic features will not make us any safer. The AR-15 and other semi-automatic firearms this bill seeks to ban, are no more powerful than other types of firearms commonly used for sporting purposes. Contrary to what has been recently said by some, modern sporting rifles like the AR-15 are indeed suitable for self-defense and are commonly used for hunting as well. Even the Department of Homeland Security has acknowledged the AR-15's usefulness as a "personal defense weapon" calling it and other modern sporting rifles "suitable for personal defense use in close quarters."⁴ Additionally, the AR-15 has become the most popular rifle sold in America due to its versatility and it accounts for some 60% of all civilian rifle sales. The very nature of its adaptability is also what makes it so appealing to hunters.
- **Ammunition restrictions** – Banning the online purchase of ammunition and requiring permits for purchase is not reasonable. Many people purchase ammunition via mail order in bulk to take advantage of competitive pricing and to obtain specific calibers, types, and brands of ammunition that may not be found in local stores. There are many types of historic firearms that are designed to use only rare cartridges which are not likely to be available in a traditional store. Additionally, many people reload ammunition by obtaining the components of an ammunition cartridge (powder, primers, casings, and bullets) and assembling them to save money and to produce accurate rounds for competition. A common way of saving even more money is to obtain spent casings that have been left behind at a shooting range. Under this bill, picking up casings off of the ground for the purpose of reloading would be a FELONY. How is this at all reasonable?

The provisions of this bill would be virtually impossible to abide by completely. Any violations will lead to the revocation of all rights to register any firearms, which will ultimately lead to confiscation. If one even simply forgets to re-register on time, they risk felony charges and confiscation of all firearms. This bill will make felons out of people for inadvertently violating the law, even though they have harmed nobody. I believe it is intentionally designed to be nothing more than an outright gun grab from top to bottom, despite anything that has been said to the contrary. I respectfully submit that this bill is one of the most blatant and outrageous attempts to infringe upon citizens' rights that I have ever seen.

I urge members to NOT vote this bill favorably out of Committee or even consider adding any of its provisions as an amendment to other bills in the future. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Kurt Weisheit

1 Ottawa Under Pressure Over Gun Registry Fiasco, David Ljunggren, Reuters, December 4, 2002.

2 Calgary Herald, September 1, 2000.

3 Opponents increase pressure to halt Canada's gun control program, Associated Press, Jan 3, 2002.

4 <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/jan/27/homeland-security-seeking-7000-assault-weapons-per>, accessed March 13, 2013