

To the members of the Judiciary Committee:

RE: *Raised Bill No. 6962 public hearing 3/11/2015*

The proposed wording to revise Section 29-37i of the general statutes is poorly worded and should be rejected for several reasons. I preface my comments first by referring back to the changes made in PA 13-3, and note that some of the wording in the existing law may have derived from an email I sent to Senator Boucher and others shortly following the tragedy at Sandy Hook. No one wants a firearm in the wrong hands, but your definition of “wrong” needs to remain specific as it is in the current law.

Under present law, anyone residing in a home not specifically prohibited by statute to possess a firearm has a right to possess. A RIGHT to possess! A firearm is the property of an individual, but all eligible people in a residence have a right to possess and use legitimately under certain circumstances.

The wording “No person shall store” implies a person, singular, presumably the individual owner... and then goes on to require mechanisms of control to prevent those in the home from acquiring access. Prior to 13-3, the restricted persons were minors. At my suggestion, it was extended to any otherwise ineligible person or anyone who posed a risk.

This is fully adequate! Changing the wording as proposed to “another person” as stated may preclude allowing access to a family member like a spouse, or a visitor who may even be a permit holder. Adding the phrase “storing or keeping the firearm” is fully redundant, not needed, and only serves to confuse literal reading of the law.

In the other references where specifically ineligible persons are noted and replaced with “any other person”, the law becomes overly restrictive, does nothing to enhance actual and responsible storage of firearms, and makes it unclear that there are rights enumerated in other statute and the State Constitution. Laws need to clarify, not obfuscate. However intended, the wording as proposed obfuscates.

I would concede one point. The first rule of common sense firearm safety is to treat all firearms as always loaded. I agree the word “loaded” should be removed, the rest of the law left unchanged.

Sincerely,

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