

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Judiciary Committee  
March 11, 2015

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**OPPOSE: Raised H.B. No. 6962 - AN ACT CONCERNING FIREARM SAFETY**

Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I would like to express my sincere **opposition** to HB6962. Encouraging the safe storage of firearms seems to be the intended purpose of this bill and while a laudable goal, this bill is fundamentally flawed.

- There is no exception for a third party, i.e. “another” person, to use a firearm for self-defense even if they are not a “prohibited” person. For example, if the owner of the firearm fails to secure it under the strict terms of this bill, they would be guilty of “criminally negligent storage of a firearm” and subject to felony charges if that firearm was used by a spouse or other family member against “any other person”, such as a violent home invader.
- The proposed amendment to Sec. 2. Section 52-571g of the C.G.S. would hold a gun-owner “strictly liable for damages” even if their firearm was stolen by a person who obtains it as a result of an unlawful entry to any premises. The exemption language, found in the proposed amendment to Sec. 3. Section 53a-217a, does not exist for Sec. 2.
- This bill changes the burden of proof for a defendant during a risk warrant hearing. The current ‘innocent until proven guilty’ system, which is already heavily perverted by the risk warrant law, makes it clear that upon an accusation, you are guilty until proven innocent. This is completely backwards. The burden should be upon the state to prove their case, not the individual Citizen.

Instead, the Joint Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding should be encouraged to raise Proposed Bill H.B. No. 5295 “AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TAX CREDIT UNDER THE PERSONAL INCOME TAX FOR THE PURCHASE OF GUN SAFES.” Additionally, a public safety campaign should be created to educate Citizens of the serious consequences of failing to properly store a loaded firearm and encourage gun-owners to take advantage of this tax incentive. “Gun safety advocates” should be more than willing to fund such a common sense, life saving program.

I urge members to vote AGAINST this bill. The current laws pertaining to the safe storage of firearms are more than adequate to encourage responsibility.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Kurt Weisheit