

To whom it May Concern,

Our names are James R. and Bonnie A. Nault. We live at 41 Pearl Street, Mystic CT 06355. James retired from the United States Navy at the rank of Captain after 31 years of service, having command of USS Toledo (SSN-769), a 688 class attack submarine homeported in Groton. Bonnie is a 29-year veteran of the United States Navy's Civil Engineer Corps and she also retired at the rank of Captain. We are both Connecticut concealed carry permit holders. James was a submarine Weapons Officer and a two-time holder of the Navy expert pistol medal, and Bonnie is an awardee of the Navy expert rifle medal. Bonnie is also a Town of Groton Town Council member and James is a member of the Town of Groton Representative Meeting. We rise in opposition to House Bill 5054 because it represents a serious and unconscionable threat to the Second Amendment rights of all Connecticut gun owners.

This bill would allow the confiscation of all firearms legally owned and possessed by a State of Connecticut concealed carry permit holder after an *ex parte* hearing, i.e. a hearing in which the firearm owner was *not present*. The dangers of this idea are immediately apparent. A law abiding gun owner could have his or her entire inventory of firearms confiscated on the mere say so of a significant other. This would require a court order, but judges in the superior courts would likely err on the side of caution and order the confiscation that this bill allows in order to prevent the minutest chance that something "bad" might happen. In the meantime, a perfectly legal gun owner, who may legally have a sizeable number of firearms for legal purposes such as hunting, target practice, firearm competition, or home defense, may find his entire inventory of firearms confiscated without having a chance to defend himself or herself in court. And, when the firearm owner is found to be innocent of any wrongdoing, he or she may find that it takes months, at least, to retrieve the firearms that were improperly seized in the first place. In the meantime the gun owner will be unable to defend herself from home invasion or other threat to hearth and home. This improperly burdens a law-abiding citizen's Second Amendment rights, which is egregious given that the proper solution is so simple: have the legal firearm owner at the hearing when the decision to confiscate firearms is made. This is the only constitutionally adequate procedure, especially since the United States Supreme Court has held that using a firearm to defend oneself in the home is a fundamental right, akin to the right to free speech, the right to freedom of religion, the right to trial by a jury of one's peers, etc. Removing that right without hearing the firearm owner's side of the story is not right and we demand that this bill not even be presented for a vote by the State House or Senate.

Sincerely,



James R. Nault



Bonnie A. Nault