

Tuesday, March 01, 2016
Public Safety Committee
Public Hearing Testimony

COMMENTS REGARDING H.B. No. 5274 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE
OF DRONES. (PS)

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Larson, Representative Dargan; Ranking Members Senator Guglielmo, Representative Zupkus, and esteemed members of the Committee,

First and foremost, I sincerely regret and apologize for not being able to testify in front of you in person, unfortunately a conflict arose prohibiting my presence today. However, I would like to have my comments entered into the public record regarding the current "Drone" legislation.

My name is Jeremiah F. Dunn, I am currently employed as a Sergeant with of the Town of Clinton Police Department. I have been a member of the Clinton Police for 23 years, and have been a full time police officer in the State of Connecticut for the past 32 years.

During the calendar year of 2015, the Clinton Police Department became aware of an issue, and initiated an investigation into the report that a resident from the town of Clinton had apparently constructed a flying machine (drone) that had been equipped with a working operable hand gun attached to it, which was capable of actually firing rounds from that handgun remotely.

A video of this alleged incident was published on an internet website and went viral very quickly. This incident not only made state and local news, but made national and international news as well.

Here is a link to the story on the incident: <http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/21/us/gun-drone-connecticut/>

My initial thought upon seeing the video for the first time was, "this cannot be legal." However, after Clinton Police investigators conferred with the State Attorney for Middlesex County, The Connecticut State Police Firearms Unit, as well individuals from the ATF and FAA, it was deemed that the actions depicted in this now "viral" video, were NOT unlawful under current state, federal, or local legislation.

Basically, I along with the investigators of the Clinton Police were advised: "That as long as the individual operating/shooting the device/firearm is legally allowed to possess firearms (such as: possesses a valid pistol permit, or is on their own property, or is not an individual that has been convicted of a crime that would deem them as being "handgun disqualified"), AND that person is operating/shooting the device in an area where it is legal to discharge a firearm (such as a public range or private property where shooting is permitted) than the act is NOT illegal"

I would be remiss if I didn't state the following, I am a staunch supporter of the 2nd Amendment. However, my personal opinion aside, as a longtime serving, well respected, highly decorated law enforcement officer here in the State of Connecticut, I see NO possible reason

whatsoever, that a remotely operated firearm attached to a flying machine serves any lawful purpose in everyday civilian life/use. The possibilities of malfunction and the “what could go wrongs” and the obvious dangers are too lengthy to list here.

Every police officer in the State of Connecticut runs the risk that on each and every day, the possibility exists of not returning home at the end of their respective shifts. We all knew that risk when we accepted the jobs we have. However, I think it would be unfair and unreasonable to have to force police officers to now look to “the skies” to see where their next threat may be coming from.

I urge you to please consider making the possession and use of a remotely operated flying firearm a crime in the State of Connecticut.

I thank you for your time and consideration in this matter and for allowing my written testimony in this matter.

Respectfully submitted;

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