

Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, and honorable members of the Public Safety and Security Committee,

My name is Chris Lemos and I am a resident of Stratford. I am also a certified firearms instructor and the Vice President of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League.

I am writing in opposition to H.B. No. 5408 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT.

I call this the “show me your papers, mach schnell!” bill. Yes, that’s offensive, just like this bill is. If this bill passes, the following becomes law:

(b) The holder of a permit issued pursuant to section 29-28 shall carry such permit upon one's person while carrying such pistol or revolver. Such holder shall present his or her permit upon the request of a law enforcement officer [who has reasonable suspicion of a crime] for purposes of verification of the validity of the permit or identification of the holder, provided such law enforcement officer has reason to believe such holder is carrying a pistol or revolver. [that is observed by such law enforcement officer.]

Connecticut does not have any “stop and identify” law. (Motor vehicle laws are different. You consent to being stopped while driving when you get your driver’s license). The US Supreme Court has generally upheld that police may not stop a person and ask for identification without a reasonable suspicion that a crime has been or is about to be committed (Again, not counting motor vehicle laws where you have already given consent by virtue of your drivers license. Also, driving is a privilege, bearing arms for self defense is a constitutionally protected **right**.) This proposed bill changes that, removes the reasonable suspicion protection that every other American enjoys, and treats certain people like second-class citizens simply because they **might** have a legally owned object on their person.

Now, lots of people are going to say “*If you aren't breaking the law, what's the big deal?*” The big deal is law-abiding gun owners would be stripped of a Fourth Amendment protection **every** other person in Connecticut enjoys; the right to simply go about your business without being stopped to have your identification checked and verified. To me, that is a big deal. If instead of gun owners, this bill was about stopping people simply to verify citizenship based on their appearances would you support it? Would you support the police stopping ANYONE else and requiring that person present ID based purely on a person’s appearance? If this bill passes, you have just legalized police profiling.

Of course, if you actually ARE a criminal, you would be exempt from this bill. That’s because the Supreme Court has also ruled that criminals have a 5th Amendment right protecting them from self-incrimination. See Haynes v. United States for one example.

Thank you for your service to the people of Connecticut, and thank you for considering my opinion on this matter.

Chris Lemos

Stratford, CT

CCDL



Carry on!