

## Hobart, Jamie

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**From:** jason zetoff <jszetoff@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 01, 2016 4:07 PM  
**To:** pstestimony  
**Subject:** HB 5408

I wanted to voice my strong support for HB 5408, which requires persons who carry handguns in public to have their permits on their person at all times and to show those permits when requested by police.

I am a Newtown teacher and a Sandy Hook resident. I remember 12-14-12 like it was yesterday. And gun violence continues to take a devastating toll on our society. We had three mass shootings in the past week alone. Gun violence is an American epidemic. The United States has 25 times the level of gun violence as other developed countries. This should not be acceptable to anyone, and the time for excuses is long past.

I am proud that Connecticut is a leader in commonsense gun laws. After implementing Connecticut's permit-to-purchase law in 1994, gun homicides fell by 40%. And our Governor and Senators continue to lead the country's conversation on sensible gun legislation.

When it comes to the open carrying of handguns, we need a commonsense solution to ensure public safety. There is no way to determine if someone is a "good guy with a gun" or a "bad guy with a gun" just by looking at that person. The person has a loaded weapon on him and the ability to take multiple lives in seconds, and we have to ASSUME that he is a good guy until he proves otherwise. That's the situation we are in right now.

The open carrying of handguns also generates fear and intimidation among many members of the public. There is NOTHING to stop an individual from using a gun to bully and intimidate others. For example, in a Hartford Courant Letter to the Editor dated 12-29-15, Amy Beth Kirsten from New Haven talks about shopping in PetCo: "The man carrying the firearm was pacing from the line to the register and back again while we were waiting to be served. When he noticed that I saw his gun, he walked slowly by me and stared at me."

More recent incidents, such as the Redding resident who saw a man open carrying at Caraluzzi's in Bethel, also underscore the need to make customer safety a priority.

An individual's refusal to show their permit when requested by a policeman goes even further in instilling fear. Police should not be impeded from doing their job, such as was the case with the individual carrying in a Subway in Bridgeport. The police are hired to protect and serve the public. How are we protected if they can't adequately determine if someone is a law-abiding citizen or not? Connecticut's permit-to-purchase law ensures that only law-abiding citizens can carry handguns. Therefore, all gun carriers should be required to show that they comply with the law. This protects EVERYONE, including the lawful gun carriers!!

Yes, American citizens have the right to own a gun. But with that right, comes responsibility. The approval of this bill is a critical step in honoring that right as well as the public's right to go about their business in relative comfort and safety.

Sincerely,

Jason Zetoff  
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