

TO: PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE

FROM: ANN COLLOTON, 34 THOMSON RD. WEST HARTFORD, CT 06107

RE: H.B. 5408 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT

AND

S.B. 20 AN ACT CONCERNING CARRYING FIREARM WHILE INTOXICATED OR UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL

DATE: March 3, 2016

I am writing in support of H.B. 5408 which would eliminate confusions about when a law enforcement officer can request to see a person's open carry pistol permit, and in support of S.B. 20 which would make the intoxication standard the same for operating a motor vehicle and carrying a firearm.

With every right and privilege comes responsibility. In today's world, a gun can mean a threat in any school, any movie theater, any mall, any church, or any college campus, so those who choose to openly carry a gun have a responsibility to ensure others feel safe by showing they are obeying the law. I understand how an open carry permit holder might feel they are being "profiled" because others assume they are a threat even if they are just going about their legal business. But *given that guns are inherently lethal*, it is different from other non-lethal situations where an officer doesn't have a legitimate reason to ask you to produce documentation. With the right comes responsibility. If there is a gun, there is an inherent threat, so showing a law enforcement officer that one has a legal permit to carry them seems very reasonable. Show the permit and be on your way. That should be simple and something a law abiding gun carrier should be willing to do. This bill would clarify things for a police officer who is responding to a concerned call from another citizen after seeing someone carrying a gun in a public place. Let's make the law clear for both gun carriers and police officers alike. This is why I support H.B. 5408.

If we are going to drive a car, we need to complete certain training and abide by certain laws and restrictions such as speed limits, seat belts, driver's license, vision tests, sobriety tests, etc. These restrictions were put in place as public health measures to save lives, and research shows these laws have effectively reduced driving deaths. With gun deaths reaching almost 30,000 per year in our country, we need similar public health restrictions to reduce gun deaths. Making the blood alcohol standard the same for firearms and motor vehicles makes perfect sense since both can be deadly when not operated with a clear mind. This is why I support S.B. 20.