Testimony in support of HB 7218 aka Ethan’s Law

Dear Legislators,

The day of 1/31/2018 will be a day I will never forget and a day I wish never happened. I was at work, in Tarrytown, NY, a good 2 hours from my home in Guilford. That Wednesday afternoon I received a phone call from my son, Leo, that will send chills down my spine forever. Leo was terrified and out of breath and he could not get his words out, he was not making sense. I stood at my desk and said ‘what’s wrong’ in a mother's unmistakably frantic voice. My colleagues instantly came to my side knowing something was terribly wrong.

Leo was finally able, between sobs and fear, to say that Ethan had been shot. He did not have any details but that Ethan’s brother Evan had reached out and needed a ride to Yale NH Hospital to get to his brother and to his family. Leo was so scared that he was locking all the doors to the house and hiding upstairs in his bedroom, he did not know what had happened. While my colleagues gathered my belongings and pulled up my car, I instructed Leo to call one of our friends to come get him and keep him calm and safe until I arrived. I, myself, had trouble catching my breath. The feelings of anguish swept over me like nothing I had ever felt in my life and do not ever want to feel again. When I think of what I felt, I cannot even begin to imagine what the Songs went through that unbearable day and the days that have followed since.

When I finally got to my friends house there were dozens of my son's friends there, in a fog of grief. These vibrant, wonderful young friends of Evan, Emily and Ethan Song were stumbling, confused, crying, and holding each other while stuck in frozen moments of time that they all just did not want to believe was real. We, the parents, attempted to hold them and console them and help any way we possibly could to ease the pain they were feeling for their friends who were like family to all of them.

This misery and grief and heartache did not have to happen. Ethan did not have to lose his life that day of January 31, 2018. The gun that Ethan and his friend got a hold of should have been properly and safely secured so no one could have access to them. That is a simple responsibility that lies on the gun owner. I support HB 7218 to assure that another child does not lose their life senselessly. I support HB 7218 so family, friends, and entire communities do not have to live through a tragedy like this. No one will recover from this tragedy but we can prevent it from happening again. Please support HB 7218 and keep our children and families safe.

Respectfully,

Lisa Freund
Guilford, CT 06437
In support of HB 7218