H.B. 7218: AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS IN THE HOME

Dear Co-Chairs Winfield and Stefstrom, Ranking Members Kissel and Rebimbas, Vice-Chair Bergstein and Blumenthal and all distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am Dr. Walter Kupson from Middlebury. I have been a pistol permit holder since 2007. I am also a member of the Executive Committee of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League and an NRA certified pistol instructor.

I am also a father, husband, physician and lawful gun owner, and as such, obsessed with storing my firearms securely, with many layers of protection.

I wish to testify in OPPOSITION to H.B. 7218. You might ask how I could possibly be opposed to this proposed piece of legislation?

The original bill from 30 years ago included language that the state “may” implement firearm safety in the public school curriculum. To my knowledge, it has never been implemented. The NRA has a safety curriculum for children; so does the National Shooting Sports Foundation.

The bill proposed this session, the original version, sought to amend that clause to mandate that gun safety be taught in schools. How much more powerful and effective would this bill be if that language had remained? If it had been included, gun safety would have been made a component of the health curriculum, alongside instruction on safe sex, pregnancy prevention, vaping, bullying and substance abuse. This component of the original bill focused on education and prevention.

I would fully support this bill if it included a mandated gun safety curriculum in schools. My support of this bill would also be bolstered if it included a tax break for gun safes that would further incentivized gun owners to purchase safes.

One final thought. While safes or locked containers seem to be a good idea, and are almost full-proof against young children, one most consider their limitations. One can go onto YouTube and find easy hacks for opening some of them and those hacks don’t require specialized tools. Any child, especially adolescents, but increasingly a child of any age can reference these. No doubt safes or locked containers would lower the risk, but please understand that the risk is not zero. Safes, coupled with education, would earn my support.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Walter Kupson
Middlebury, Connecticut