Chairs and distinguished members of the Committee,
Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Rebimbas and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary:
My name is Sofia Munoz, I am 14 years old, and I live in Greenwich, CT. I am here on behalf of Connecticut Citizens Against Gun Violence. When I found out about this hearing, I knew immediately that I wanted to testify in support of H.B. 7218, An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home.
I drove all the way up here today with my father because as a 14 year old student, living in one of the wealthiest countries, a country unlike so many others that are at war, the United States is at peace. No one, especially not children and adolescents, should have to worry about being killed by gun violence, or in a gun accident.
Picture this: Two parents, excited to have a night out to celebrate their wedding anniversary. They leave both their boys alone in the house, and unbeknownst to them, they were playing a game of “army” with their father’s shotgun, when the younger son fatally shoots the older brother. That incident actually happened in a home across the street from where I go to school.
A six-year old girl, called Kayla Rowland, lived in Mount Morris Township, Michigan. On the fateful morning of February 29, 2000, she was shot to death by a male classmate who obtained his weapon from his household. He had found the handgun under a pile of sheets, and decided to bring it to school. He simply shot Kayla because he didn’t like her. These incidents play out far too often, and there is a risk that they will become normalized, and people will become numb to these tragedies.
Although thank goodness I have not lost a sibling or a loved one to gun violence, I shouldn’t have to be touched personally to feel like this is an important issue. While I live in Connecticut right now, I have lived all around the world including in the United Kingdom and Canada. My friends that live there are not fearful of being shot at school by someone who had access to a unsecured firearm in their home. I feel that it’s imperative to support this legislation, H.B. 7218, An Act Concerning Firearms in the Home.
We don’t need another child or parent standing several years from now, testifying again after a loved one has been lost in another tragic gun accident. I really think the time is now to ensure firearms are secured. It’s simply common sense. Let’s not wait for another person to be injured or killed. This is a problem that can be easily solved.
Please, I urge you to pass H.B. 7218 to protect the children and citizens of Connecticut.