March 11, 2019

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Rebimbas and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary:

My name is Vicki Zacharewicz and I am from Stamford, CT. I am a member of CAGV and Moms Demand Action. I was one of the organizers of the Stamford March for Our Lives Rally almost one year ago.

I am testifying in support of H.B. 7218, An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home.

I became an advocate for gun sense laws in 1999, after the Columbine tragedy. I could not understand why these teens could act so savagely, but more so, where could they get their hands on these weapons?

Fast forward to present day, where in 2018 gun deaths increased to nationally to 40,000 per year! Over 100 people a day dying in this country - THAT is a national emergency!

This legislation is important because it will keep so many residents safe from accidental gun violence. For example, in my family, we have deer hunters. There are rifles in homes that may not be stored safely, under lock and key. And ammunition may or may not be stored near the gun. When your parent approaching 90, still says its his right to have a gun, however does not properly secure it, it is an open invitation for thieves to break in, steal the gun and possibly inflict violence. If these safe storage laws existed, at least family members like myself (along with local police officers) could explain to an elderly person the legal, proper way to store a gun.

Every day, eight children are unintentionally shot or killed by a gun. Securely stored firearms—whether loaded or not—would prevent most of these tragedies. Here in Connecticut, Ethan Song, a 15-year old from Guilford, was killed in January 2018 when he got access to an unsecured handgun at a friend's house.

I strongly support H.B. 7218, and urge you to favorably vote these bills out of the Judiciary Committee.

Sincerely,

Vicki Zacharewicz
Stamford, CT

Cc: Rep. Pat Billie Miller  patricia.miller@cga.ct.gov