

## Peterson, Bobbye

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**From:** Christopher Bitel <cbitel87@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 11, 2019 8:24 AM  
**To:** JudTestimony  
**Subject:** Judiciary Committee Testimony from Christopher Bitel for 3-11-19

March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
To Whom it may concern:

My name is Christopher Bitel and I am from Middletown, CT. I am writing this to the Judiciary Committee of the CT legislature in opposition and support of the following bills:

**OPPOSE: SB 60 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT.**

**OPPOSE: HB 7218 AN ACT CONCERNING SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS IN THE HOME**

**OPPOSE: HB 7223 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STORAGE OF A PISTOL OR REVOLVER IN A MOTOR VEHICLE**

**OPPOSE: HB 7223 AN ACT CONCERNING GHOST GUNS**

**SUPPORT: SB 940 AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN PERSONS TO CARRY HANDGUNS IN STATE PARKS AND STATE FORESTS**

**SUPPORT: HB 5227 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF FIREARMS BY MUNICIPALITIES**

**SUPPORT: HB 5870 AN ACT CONCERNING TRANSFER OF ASSAULT WEAPONS AND LARGE CAPACITY MAGAZINES**

I understand the primary reason for proposing many of these bills is to prevent violence with the intent on saving lives. I worry however that by supporting many of these, you are doing little to actually prevent any violence and are only continuing the erosion of the rights of Connecticut citizens.

I am opposing HB 7218 and HB 7223 because they do nothing to prevent actual violence. Safe storage is of course a must for every individual with kids in the house who owns not only firearms, but any dangerous tools ie. Chainsaws, sharp knives, etc. The current safe storage bill which was passed in 1990 was supposed to have an educational program in conjunction with local police implemented into the school system to teach basic safety and situational awareness of what to do when encountering a firearm. However because there is no educational requirement in today's bill, this bill will do nothing to actually prevent a similar tragedy that happened in Guilford a year ago. Without the REQUIRED education program, the bill is essentially useless under preventative standards, and stands to solely criminalize people after the fact, without really promoting any type of safety or saving lives. As for transporting in an automobile, if a small safe was used, and the firearm was to be stolen a small lockbox would be stolen along with the firearm, and nothing would be prevented. Again this is a law looking to criminalize individuals, not save lives.

The ghost gun bill (HB 7223) is probably the most egregiously worded bill I have seen proposed. I say that respectfully, to point out the potential for serious misunderstandings and unintentional criminalization of everyday people. The bill redefines a firearm as not only a frame or receiver, but anything that could be turned into a frame or a receiver. That's problematic for me personally as I am a machinist, and manage a small manufacturing company. Many items we have in the shop, such as a block of steel could now in theory be defined as a firearm under the law. Imagine a completed firearm is on one side of the spectrum, and a block of steel is on the other, at what point does that block of steel become a firearm? The ATF defines this as the 80% stage, before an area for the trigger hole, rails, and barrel are milled out to allow it to be potentially assembled and functional. This bill has no definition of this point and is therefore too vague for a person of common intelligence to understand.

I also have issue with this bill because it is essentially demanding that everyday citizens obtain a serial number from the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. DESPP is not currently equipped

to handle such a task and has no plans to be in the near future. Furthermore, this idea of the general public being forced to tell the state what they have in their home is to me a gross violation of privacy. It is currently illegal for a felon, domestic abuser, or an individual adjudicated mentally unfit to build a homemade firearm. Nothing about this bill would prevent said action from occurring, and rather creates a de facto registration for law abiding citizens who have committed no crimes. Again, an example where today's legislation does nothing to prevent crime, nothing to save any lives, and rather just continues to erode the rights of all of your constituents.

Sincerely,  
Christopher Bitel  
Middletown, CT