

March 1, 2019

RE: Oppose H.B. No. 7219 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING GHOST GUNS.

TO: The members of the Judiciary Committee, (judtestimony@cga.ct.gov)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opposing testimony regarding this bill.

Certain firearms without a serial numbers, made from so called "80%" lowers are perfectly legal for individuals to complete and own. They pose no additional threat to the public at large. Making an 80% lower into a firearm for resale is already illegal, unless you have a manufacturer's license, and then the firearms must have serial numbers stamped on them.

Making any 'banned' weapon like an AR15 from an 80% lower is also illegal.

Criminals, when asked how they obtain their firearms, almost never say they 'made them themselves'.

They generally steal them or engage a straw purchaser, both of which are already illegal activities.

Prior to 1968, non-NFA firearms were not required to have serial numbers. Many of these firearms are collector's pieces, and adding stamps or etched numbers would reduce their value. How would this be handled in the law?

In addition, the section on the definition of a polymer plastic lower again miss-uses the information on how guns are required to be detected by scanning equipment. They do NOT have to have "at least three point seven ounces of material type 17-4 PH 139 stainless steel" included in them, they have to trip the scanner at the same level as that amount of material. I.E. 6 ounces of another material that still trips the sensor would still be permitted.

While tracing serial numbers might aid in tracking the provenance of a firearm used in a crime, it doesn't stop the crime from happening in the first place. At the national level, there is only a 50% success rate of tracking serialized firearms today.

I have seen no evidence that non-serialized firearms (other than those stolen that have had their serial numbers removed) are used in any significant portion of crimes.

In closing, using the data in "Case Statistics for Firearms-Related Offenses" publication 2018-R-0018 of the Office of Legislative Research, I analyzed the "nolle" rate (failure to prosecute on a charge) for gun related offenses over the period 2013 to 2017. The data showed that for all firearms offenses charged, the nolle rate was an astonishing 68.51%. Keep in mind that this was for all offenses combined, the rate for the more serious offenses is even worse. This analysis of the state's own data shows that we don't enforce the laws we already have, never mind adding new ones that cannot be reasonably enforced. Please stop attempting to pass "Feel Good" laws that have no impact on actual crime and just serve to curtail legal gun owner's rights.

Respectfully,

William D. Curlew
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