

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

My name is Michael Eanes, I am from Litchfield, CT. I am a retired independent school Head of School, having served schools as an employee and board member in Connecticut and six other states.

I am testifying in support of H.B. 7218, An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home, H.B. 7223, An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in Vehicles, H.B. 7219, An Act Concerning Ghost Guns and S.B. 60 An Act Concerning the Presentation of a Carry Permit.

Having worked in elementary and high schools for over five decades the safety of our children is of greatest concern to me. Following Columbine, Sandy Hook, Parkland and other mass shootings I have had to stand before student assemblies to not only deliver the tragic news, but to try and explain why these shootings occur. It is one thing to talk about these events with adults; it is quite another to discuss them with children, who interestingly are less likely to accept rationalization and adult explanations. If you have any doubt about the effect on our children, just visit a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class!

While I have no issues with the right to own guns, I so strongly believe we must limit in every way access to guns and ammunition. These bills address that issue. As school shootings are the most vivid in my experience, the bulk of gun deaths occur with stolen firearms. Again, limiting access can mitigate these occurrences.

Please note the following data points as compiled by CAGV:

1. It is well documented that the risk of teen suicide—the third leading cause of death among 15 to 19 year olds—increases when there is a gun in the home, even more so when the firearm is kept loaded. The rate of firearm suicide among children and teens has increased 61% over the 1 past decade.<sup>2</sup>
2. Over 80% of child firearm suicides used a gun belonging to a family member. Studies show that child access prevention laws, and safe storage in general, reduce the risk of adolescent suicide. One found that keeping a gun locked lowers the risk of both unintentional injury and suicide for children and teenagers by 73%.

3. Every day, eight children are unintentionally shot or killed by a gun. A study found that households that locked both firearms and ammunition had an 85% lower risk of unintentional gun deaths compared to those who lock neither.
4. 4.6 million children live in a home with an unlocked, loaded firearm. The U.S. General Accounting Office estimated that 31% of accidental deaths caused by firearms might be prevented with the addition of two devices: a child-proof safety lock and a loading indicator.
5. More than 75% of 1st and 2nd graders know where their parents keep their firearms and one-third admitted handling the weapons, contradicting their parents' reports.
6. In 2015, about 4% of students ages 12–18 reported having access to a loaded gun without adult permission .
7. On average, there are 1,550 incidents of students having firearms at public schools each school year. 75% of guns used in school shootings come from the shooter's home or that of a 10 relative.
8. On average, a gun is stolen in the U.S. every two minutes. More than 238,000 guns were reported stolen in the U.S. in 2016, although because of underreporting, the total number of gun thefts is much higher, estimated at 380,000 each year. It is estimated that in 2015 more than 2,600 firearms were stolen in Connecticut .
9. Circumstantial evidence suggests that most gun thefts are from owners who leave them unsecured in unlocked homes or cars.
10. Because all guns start as legal guns, gun thefts are a key source of guns to the illegal market that are later used in the commission of crimes. Studies show that a majority of guns recovered from crime scenes were stolen. A study of the 893 guns recovered by Pittsburgh police from crimes in 2008 found that 80% of the suspects used guns owned by someone else <sup>17</sup>. Between 2010 and 2015 more than 4,600 guns were reported lost or stolen in Austin. During that same time period, lost and stolen firearms were recovered in some 600 crimes.

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

My name is Gregory Weaver. I am from West Hartford, CT. I am a lifelong CT Resident and a father of two young children. Since Parkland, my wife (Catherine "Kate" Weaver) has been very active in the gun violence prevention movement. I too support this movement and her efforts. We need to continue to enact common sense gun laws in our State and Country.

I am testifying in **support** of H.B. 7218, *An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home*, H.B. 7223 *An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in Vehicles*, and H.B. 7219, *An Act Concerning Ghost Guns*.

I support HB 7218 - safe storage of firearms in the home. Gun owners should be held responsible for failing to safely store their firearms. Expanding safe storage requirements will send a clear message to irresponsible gun owners: lock up your firearms when they are not in your immediate control or be held accountable. This is a common-sense proposal, and one we should support.

I support HB 7219 - the regulation of ghost and 3D printed guns. The existence of this technology gives dangerous people the ability to evade background checks. Furthermore, the circulation of untraceable guns increases the transfer of guns on the black market - allowing criminals to obtain a gun without a permit. The threat to public safety is real. We need to do what we can to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. This would be one more step toward achieving that goal.

I support H.B. 7218, H.B. 7219 and H.B. 7223. Please favorably vote these bills out of the Judiciary Committee.

Sincerely,

Gregory Weaver  
West Hartford, CT