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Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I support the following bills on the agenda:

S.B. 60 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT.:

While this bill removes the requirement that a law enforcement officer needs to have reasonable suspicion of a crime when requesting the presentation of a permit, I feel it would overall help in regard to stopping the flow of guns that are illegally owned or otherwise being transported.

H.B. 7218 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS IN THE HOME.:

Frankly, this should be a no-brainer. Requiring the safe storage of firearms in the home is the first step toward requiring everyone in the home to be safe, especially minors who might otherwise have inadvertent access to firearms when unsupervised. I'd personally prefer it if this bill was made stronger to require safe firearm storage in the home regardless if minors live in said home, but otherwise this bill is a step in the right direction.

H.B. 7219 - AN ACT CONCERNING GHOST GUNS.:

In supporting this, we realize the emergence of new technologies, and the potential flaws that come with them. Just because 3D-printed or otherwise homemade firearms haven't been used in a crime in the state of Connecticut, doesn't mean we shouldn't regulate them, but rather be proactive before it happens. I have noticed, however, that prior to the passage of the Gun Control Act of 1968, that not all firearms produced before its passage have serial numbers. Gun owners who own these guns should be given a grace period of some sort to have them serialized. Since this is not codified in this piece of legislation, it should be amended to do so.

H.B. 7223 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE STORAGE OF A PISTOL OR REVOLVER IN A MOTOR VEHICLE.:

Similar to what I mentioned in my testimony for H.B. 7218, any bill that would require the safe storage of a firearm is a step in the right direction.

I oppose the following bills on the agenda:

S.B. 940 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN PERSONS TO CARRY HANDGUNS IN STATE PARKS AND STATE FORESTS.:

This is akin to a "stand-your-ground" law, if the statement of purpose is to allow these certain persons to carry these firearms for the purposes of self-defense. Research into stand-your-ground type laws have only revealed that they serve to increase homicide rates. A significant number of gun owners do claim self-defense as the reason for owning a gun, which is fine in and of itself, but in public areas, people should have a duty to retreat from that area in which they are threatened, and in actuality, the use of a firearm in self-defense is actually a rarely justified claim.

H.B. 5227 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF FIREARMS BY MUNICIPALITIES.:

This bill particularly offends me, though it brings up an important point. I believe municipalities should have the right to enact firearm regulations in places where the state falls short, but at the same time, our gun laws should be uniform across the entire state. If there is a municipal regulation that helps improve gun safety that's not incorporated at the state level, it should be considered in a bill at the state level. However, what really offends me about this bill is that it prevents municipalities from defining firearm activities from doing something that should be common sense at this point – that some activities may be a public nuisance or detrimental to public health and safety. The mere presence of a gun is detrimental to public health and safety, increasing the risk of violence and even suicide. This would be more readily known, if the federal government hadn't completely forbidden the Centers for Disease Control from doing its own research when the Dickey Amendment was added to the federal omnibus spending bill in 1996. This amendment was eased in 2018 when they allowed the CDC to do research, but it still completely disallows funding from the federal government for research, still leaving them mostly hamstrung.

H.B. 5870 - AN ACT CONCERNING TRANSFER OF ASSAULT WEAPONS AND LARGE CAPACITY MAGAZINES.:

Frankly, I'm not even sure why we should have this bill, when we should be banning assault weapons and large capacity magazines to begin with. The banning of specific weapons and ammunition wouldn't infringe on gun owner's rights to keep and bear weapons in general. No one needs an assault weapon or large capacity magazines for anything the general public would see as acceptable to own a firearm for.

Overall, we need improved gun safety legislation, not to restrict the rights of law-abiding gun owners, but to protect those who choose not to own guns. Thank you.