

March 10, 2019

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I have lived in Connecticut for 30 years, my entire adult life. I am a child of a WWII veteran and grew up with guns in my home.

I am grateful to be raising my family on the Connecticut Shoreline and am active in my three children's schools and our community. I love living here and feel it is important to be engaged and contributing in town. My circles of friends and neighbors have been impacted by gun violence on more than one occasion. I am gravely aware of the importance of this opportunity to express my support and rejection of the various bills related to keeping us safe here in Connecticut.

I implore you to please put your party affiliations aside, ignore industry lobbyists, and reflect on what will truly make every one of us safer. Guns are lethal, people using them cause lethal harm, they must be treated as killing machines, and you must now act with respect for their lethality.

Here I would like to document my SUPPORT for the following bills:

H.B. No. 7218 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS IN THE HOME

To require the safe storage of all firearms, whether loaded or unloaded, in a home with a minor under eighteen years of age.

Please support the passage of HB 7218, also known as "Ethan's Law." The bill was sponsored by a bipartisan group of representatives who recognize that straightforward and effective weapon storage reduces gun injuries and deaths by removing easy, unintentional and immediate access to a lethal weapon. Curious children/teens, friends and relatives, children/teens considering an impulsive act, people coping with mental illness, and victims of domestic violence will all be safer with the protections afforded by safer gun storage and weapons that are not freely accessible. Home burglars will not be able to leave the premises with a stolen gun and add it to the firepower on the streets in our cities and towns, or add it to the illegal gun market. Most gun owners are responsible and support safe storage of their weapons, and the NRA's own website states: "Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons." HB 7218 achieves this goal. Please pass HB 7218.

H.B. No. 7223 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STORAGE OF A PISTOL OR REVOLVER IN A MOTOR VEHICLE. (JUD)

To require safe storage of a pistol or revolver in a motor vehicle.

Please support the passage of HB 7223. The bill was sponsored by representatives who recognize that simple, effective weapon storage reduces gun injuries and deaths by removing easy, immediate access to a lethal weapon. Curious children/teens, friends, relatives, children/teens considering an impulsive act, people struggling with mental illness, and victims of domestic violence will all be safer with the protections afforded by safer gun storage. Car thieves will not be able to leave the vehicle with a stolen gun and add it to the firepower on the streets in our cities and towns, or add it to the illegal gun market. Most gun owners are responsible and support safe storage of their weapons, and the NRA's own website states: "Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons." HB 7223 achieves this goal. Please vote YES on HB 7223.

S.B. No. 60 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT

To require individuals openly carrying to produce their permit if their firearm is visible and if requested by a law enforcement officer.

Please support the passage of SB 60. The bill was sponsored by representatives who recognize that public safety will be enhanced when all citizens, including law abiding gun owners, are protected from those illegally carrying a firearm in public. Presentation of appropriate documentation is not an infringement on rights, and is akin to showing identification when we vote. Please vote YES on SB 60.

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

To ban guns without serial numbers and regulate those which are sold in a form requiring the purchaser to finish assembly or that are homemade or 3-D printed.

Please pass HB 7219. The bill is sponsored by representatives who recognize this law will enhance public safety. Please vote YES on HB 7219.

Here I would like to document my REJECTION of the following bills:

S.B. No. 940 (RAISED) AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN PERSONS TO CARRY HANDGUNS IN STATE PARKS AND STATE FORESTS

To allow persons to carry handguns in state parks and state forests for the purpose of self-defense.

Please reject SB 940. I spend a great deal of time with my children, friends and pets in state parks and forests. There are many of these areas near my home, and they are a regular part of our leisure time activities. The size of containers for alcohol and policies regarding pets are steps already taken in state parks to keep the park experience safe and enjoyable for all visitors. Obviously a gun presents a much greater potential threat than either of those issues, and should therefore also be limited. Weapons are already prohibited from state police buildings and the state capitol building as well as many municipal buildings throughout the state. If prohibition of guns is good enough for those areas, then it is good enough for state parks and forests too. Weapons for hunting, only during hunting season and with proper hunting licensing, should be exempt from this law. Except for hunting, there is no reason for a park visitor to require a gun on their person while visiting a park or forest, and we will all be safer without changing current law. Please vote NO on SB 940.

H.B. No. 5227 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF FIREARMS BY MUNICIPALITIES

To prohibit the regulation of firearms by municipalities.

Please reject HB 5227. The bill is an effort to deny local control to achieve safety measures in Connecticut towns as sought by individual town residents. This bill endangers the public and is not worthy of passage. Please vote NO on HB 5227.

H.B. No. 5870 AN ACT CONCERNING TRANSFER OF ASSAULT WEAPONS AND LARGE CAPACITY MAGAZINES

To allow the legal transfer of an assault weapon possessed under a certificate of possession and large capacity magazines possessed under a declaration of possession between people who already legally possess such weapons or magazines.

Please reject HB 5870. The bill endangers public safety by easing transfer of weapons and ammunition that have no place in civilian life. Military style weapons and their ammunition should only be used in the military or law enforcement, and have no place in civilian life. Please vote NO on HB 5870.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Skudder
Madison, CT

Dear Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing in support of HB-7218, HB-7223, HB-7219 and SB-60.

As a school counselor in training at Central Connecticut State University, I care deeply for the physical and mental health safety of children of Connecticut, and it is my duty to support their healthy growth and development. HB-7218 will allow us to take one step closer to ensuring safe storage of guns, therefore eliminating accidental harm and reducing the possibility of intentional self-harm. I urge you to support the passing of HB-7218, HB-7223, HB-7219 and SB-60 so we can expediently build safe communities for our children.

Thank you,
Kathryn Gallagher
New Haven