

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I write to you today as a mother, a Social Worker and a very concerned resident of Guilford, Connecticut.

There have been several instances in my life, personally and professionally, when I have been affected by gun violence. As a 13 year old, a family friend was murdered when a patient brought a gun into an interview. I spent the next year as a volunteer with Father Drinan in Boston as he attempted to create safer gun regulations. At 16 my high school friend told me that she would be unable to go to the prom because her boyfriend had just been shot, and she was not sure that he'd make it. Shortly after my father died in 1994, my mother was robbed at gunpoint. That trauma compounded the loss of my father, and was made even worse because the robber took my father's wedding band that my mother was wearing on a necklace.

As a Social Worker I have worked with several clients whose lives have been nearly destroyed by gun violence. While I cannot go in to detail about specific cases, they include murder, suicide and children playing with a first responder's weapon—the best friend of this child was accidentally killed while they were 'playing.'

But perhaps the greatest impact on my life was the death of Ethan Song on January 31, 2018. His death was avoidable, if not for the utter negligence of the gun owner, Dan Markle. It is hard to believe that we have to legislate common sense and even harder to understand why making firearms inaccessible to children is even up for debate.

I cannot comprehend the devastation that the Song family lives with every day, but I am privileged to call them my friends. Their children, Evan and Emily, are friend with my children. On January 31, 2018 we were about to leave the house for a high school basketball game when we heard on the new that a teen had been shot in Guilford. A picture of the house where the shooting occurred appeared on the screen and my daughter said she thought the house looked familiar. Moments later I received an hysterical call from my son's best friend. He was practically unintelligible. What I did manage to hear was –“it was Ethan...Evan's brother...I don't know if he's alive.”

I hope to never feel that way again. I hope I never again have to share with my children such devastating news. All of our lives were changed that day. And in their grief, Kristin and Mike Song have dedicated their lives to making sure this never happens again to another child.

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

1. HB-7218, AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS IN THE HOME (ETHAN'S LAW).
2. HB-7219, AN ACT CONCERNING GHOST GUNS.
3. HB-7223, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STORAGE OF A PISTOL OR REVOLVER IN A MOTOR VEHICLE.
4. SB-60, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Leslie Hyman
Guilford, CT