

March 11, 2019

Chairman and Members of the CT Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to urge you to vote YES on the following bills:

- H.B. 7223 An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in Vehicles
- H.B. 7218 An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home
- H.B. 7219 An Act Concerning Ghost Guns
- S.B. 60 An Act Concerning the Presentation of a Carry Permit

I have worked on improving gun safety in Connecticut for over years. During this time, I have met family after family who have suffered the death of a loved one because a firearm was in the wrong hands. **Keeping guns away from those who may do harm with them must be our state's top priority.** All of these bills will help do that.

Loopholes in current law fail to hold accountable gun owners who do not take sufficient care to ensure that their weapons cannot be accessed by others. We know that the Sandy Hook massacre might not have happened had Mrs. Lanza kept her guns locked away from her troubled son. Most recently, But beyond that, we read stories on social media almost every day reporting the injury or death of a loved one by a friend or family member - often not the gun owner - who "accidentally" shot the victim. Often no charges are filed, no one is accountable. How can that be?? We as a society must change the culture that allows this.

In addition, those of us active in gun violence prevention are told again and again that a major source of illegal firearms in Connecticut is firearms stolen from homes within the state. Those weapons often end up in our urban communities, and are involved in shootings and homicides. This could not happen if the firearms were locked security in a gun safe, and therefore could not be stolen. SB 6962 will be a strong motivator for gun owners to take all reasonable precautions in storing their firearms, and hold accountable those who do not.

Regarding H.B.7219 to stop ghost guns and 3D printed, law enforcement MUST be able to trace guns in order to find perpetrators of crimes committed with those guns. There is no place for unserialized, untraceable, undetectable guns in Connecticut. Both categories of firearms are clear workarounds to current law, law enforcement, and common sense.

Regarding SB 60, if a person is carrying a firearm in public, law enforcement has a duty to citizens to ensure that the person is legally able to do so. The only way it is legal for the person to be carrying the firearm is for him/her to also be carrying a valid pistol permit. Therefore, police officers must be able to verify the legality of the carry, and the only way to do that is to require that permits be shown when requested to do so by law enforcement officers.

It is enough that I fear for my safety by being in the presence of firearms carried by non-professionals, who are not insured should an accident occur (as would be the case with a car). But to not even know for certain if the firearm is being possessed and carried legally is just not acceptable.

It is important to note that these bills NOT keep law-abiding citizens from owning firearms. But they WILL make us safer because they WILL do more to prevent guns from being in the wrong hands.

A YES vote on these bills is a YES vote to protect our families and communities.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Thank you,
Lisa Labella
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