

March 6, 2019

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

My name is Amy Starensier Lee, I am from Madison and 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.

Passage of all of the above laws in my opinion is not only important it is imperative!

I am sure you are all well aware of the overwhelming statistics that prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that safer gun laws unequivocally equate to fewer deaths by suicide, accident and of course intention. So I will not waste your time repeating those.

I am writing to you as a mother who lost her oldest daughter almost 15 years ago. Thankfully she did not die as a result of a gun shot. She died suddenly at the age of 11. There was no warning, there was no reason and thankfully there was nothing we could have done to prevent it. I know that may sound ironic, to use the word “thankfully” when referring to the death of one’s beloved child, but I am thankful that there was absolutely NOTHING we could have done to save our precious daughter. Because had there been something that would have protected her and we hadn’t done that, I would not be able to live with myself.

Parents—like the Songs whose son Ethan H.B. 7218 is named after—who lose their children to gun violence don’t have that

small bit of comfort because gun violence and senseless deaths caused by firearms that are not secured safely or are tampered with as in the case of Ghost Guns ARE PREVENTABLE!

So as someone who has lost a child where no fault lies, I cannot fathom what it must feel like when that is not the case—when basic common sense laws could spare parents the lifelong knowledge their child could and should still be alive. The thoughts and prayers professed one gun death after another just don't cut it. Prayer without policy is pointless. They really are just platitudes if they aren't accompanied by sincere and not self-serving action.

Politicians can pray and think all they want, but we need some earthly options sprinkled into the mix as well. So no. I am not going to pray for a solution I am going to write, call, donate, protest and work my gun hating ass-off to do everything in my physical power to make sure all the parents who have lost their children to gun violence thanks to lacks laws know that “Never Again” is not a hollow promise.

I strongly support H.B. 7218, H.B. 7219 and S.B. 60 and urge you to favorably vote these bills out of the Judiciary Committee.

Sincerely,

Amy Starensier Lee

Madison, CT