



Connecticut General Assembly
SENATE DEMOCRATS

Legislative Office Building, Room 3300
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591

House Bill No. 7219, An Act Concerning Ghost Guns.

We want to begin by addressing the argument that our gun laws are ineffective, that they merely restrict the rights of law abiding citizens, and that the gun deaths we see daily in news would continue with legislation like this. Gun laws work. The rate of gun deaths in Connecticut is 5.1 deaths a year for every 100,000 people. That is less than half of the national average, which is 11.9 gun deaths for every 100,000. Our lower death rate correlates with our gun laws, ranked the third strongest in the nation by the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. The Giffords Law Center has been tracking gun deaths and ranking guns laws since 2010, and the evidence is clear that states with stronger gun laws have lower gun deaths. If we were to trade our guns laws for those of Mississippi, which were ranked the lowest in the nation, we could expect another 580 gun deaths a year in Connecticut.¹ Being proactive about gun safety is crucial to maintain the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

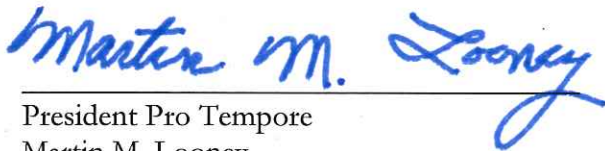
For every gun safety measure adopted that prevents unnecessary deaths, there are people who will try to circumvent the law. In response to a ban on automatic rifles, people sought bump stocks and trigger cranks. In response to background checks and waiting periods, people seek gun shows in other states. Federal law requires manufactures to affix serial numbers to firearms, which

¹ According to the Giffords Law Center, Mississippi had 21.5 gun deaths per 100,000 people last year. See Giffords Law Center, *Annual Gun Scorecard*, available at <https://lawcenter.giffords.org/scorecard/>; and *State of Gun Violence: 50 State Factsheets* (Jan. 2019), available at <https://lawcenter.giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Giffords-State-of-Gun-Violence-Factsheets-50-States.pdf>

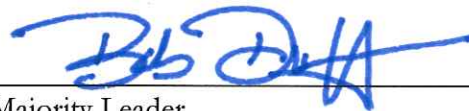
enables the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to track the weapons through the entire retail system, all the way to the consumer. Assembling and obtaining a ghost gun is just another circumvention of our laws, not only federal law but our state's background check requirements.

These background check requirements are effective. A study of our 1995 permitting law found that it was "associated with a 40% reduction in Connecticut's firearm homicide rate".² We must not permit a person unable to obtain a pistol permit due to a failed background check to then evade the law and obtain a ghost gun.

This is an issue where time matters. Crimes have been committed in America with guns illegal manufactured at home and from parts purchased online. The longer we wait to act, the more of these weapons will be created and sold for nefarious purposes. We want to thank the Committee for raising this bill and we look forward to working with all of you to move this legislation forward.



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² Kara E. Rudolph, Elizabeth A. Stuart, Jon S. Vernick, and Daniel W. Webster, *Association Between Connecticut's Permit-to-purchase Handgun Law and Homicides* (April, 6, 2015).

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