

March 11, 2019

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

My name is Beth Lander Morris, and I am currently a resident of Newington. I am a mother and a strong supporter of gun sense legislation.

I am testifying in support of HB 7218—*An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home*, HB 7219—*An Act Concerning Ghost Guns*, and HB 7223—*An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in Vehicles*. I do this because when I gave birth to my daughter three years ago, I knew that I had to participate in the gun violence prevention movement for her sake. The Sandy Hook tragedy happened just a few years before I gave birth to her, and like so many other Americans, it still haunts me. Every day my daughter gets closer to entering the public school system, and every day I am more fearful for not only the possibility of a shooting at her school, but also the trauma of having to participate in active shooter/lockdown drills. I know of some mothers who are choosing to home school their children just to avoid such drills and the associated trauma.

I am grateful to live in a state that has made great strides in gun violence prevention in the past few years, but there is still more to do.

I firmly believe that given the lack of federal action on gun violence prevention, all states should work toward closing loopholes in their gun laws. I understand that HB 7218, also known as Ethan's Law, would require all loaded or unloaded guns to be safely stored. I cannot believe how many children—especially toddlers around my daughter's age—access guns that are not safely stored. I have started to ensure that a headline for every child in such a situation shows up in my social media feed. From that I have learned just how alarmingly common these situations are all across the country, and often with deadly consequences. Reading these stories time after time is absolutely heartbreaking. I strongly support this bill in hopes that it may save even one life in the future.

Through HB 7219, a ghost gun ban will ensure that gun owners in Connecticut cannot evade background checks, all guns have a serial number, and reduce the flow of untraceable weapons into the black market. I find myself quite alarmed that such a ban does not already exist! It seems to me to be common sense that this law would help prevent criminals from further accessing firearms. Surely everyone would agree that that is a good thing?

Finally, HB 7223 will help save lives by preventing gun thefts and other unauthorized access to handguns left in unattended cars. This again strikes me as common sense. Guns left in cars can be incredibly dangerous, especially given the increase in car thefts in recent years. If someone is going to be so careless as to leave a gun in an unattended car, the least they can do is ensure it is locked away in a secure container.

I strongly support HB 7218, HB 7219, and HB 7223 and respectfully urge you to favorably vote these bills out of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Beth Lander Morris  
Newington, CT  
House District 27