

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

My name is Charlotte Nelson and I am from Simsbury, CT. I am a mother and a grandmother. I work at the University of Connecticut and I am a member of ForwardCT. I am also the Nutmeg Big Sister of a 15 year old boy who attends high school in Hartford.

The mass shootings we have more recently seen in schools, on campuses, movie theaters, concerts, religious venues, and even in parking lots and at malls are one major reason as to why I am a strong advocate for gun violence prevention. Adults and children should be able to attend school and be in public places without fear and anxiety that they or their loved one may be a victim of gun violence. The boy I am a Nutmeg Big Brother Big Sister (NBBBS) for was recently attacked by other teens, shooting at him and his friend with a BB gun. The boy, who is only 15 was walking from his friend's home to his home. They were both convinced that it was a real gun and began to run. His hand was hit, and blood spurted out. This has traumatized the boys and made them feel unsafe in their own neighborhoods. The fear of being shot at by a real gun was a realistic possibility to them and is something that children growing up in this day and age now have to deal with. They should not have to. I should not be going to work at UConn, each day, wondering if there might be an active shooter on campus that day.

I am therefore in full support of S.B. 7219, an act concerning ghost guns; regulating guns without serial numbers and 3D plastic printed guns the same as Connecticut regulates other firearms. Ghost guns allow people to evade the process of getting a gun permit and background check. These guns can easily be assembled, sold on the streets untraced and lead to homicides and domestic assaults in addition to mass shootings in our cities. In CT, Ghost guns have been seized in criminal investigations, so the threat from Ghost Guns is very real. In 2018 a Willimantic teen, for example, was arrested for selling ghost guns, telling an undercover agent that demand was so high, he couldn't keep up.

Another reason that I am an advocate for the prevention of gun violence and why I am testifying in support of H.B. 7218, *An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home* is that on a weekly basis in the US, there is a toddler who finds a gun that is not safely stored in their own home or car or that of another person and shoots it. This preventable tragedy leads to death, critical injury and trauma. As someone who works in education, is a mom and grandmother, I fear that my loved one or that of my fellow CT residents will experience the same tragic fate as Ethan Song, Guilford, CT, who accidentally shot himself while visiting a friend whose parent had not safely stored the gun.

I am to this end, also testifying in support of H.B. 7223 *An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in Vehicles*, as teens, children and intoxicated or emotionally

charged adults can easily access a gun stored in a vehicle, and discharge the gun without much thought. Guns stored in vehicles can also be stolen and sold on the black market or on the streets of CT cities. 80% of teen suicides used a gun belonging to a family member-so storing guns securely will undoubtedly save the lives of children. Additionally, a strong message needs to be sent; adults who do not securely store their guns and ammunition need to be held accountable for the dire and irreversible consequences of their inactions.

Finally, I am testifying in support S.B. 60 *An Act Concerning the Presentation of a Carry Permit*. I should be able to feel safe when I am out in public here in the state of CT, and I do not feel safe knowing that people are permitted to carry their guns in public, especially as I do not know their motive for doing so and if they may at any given notice commit harm to others. Also given that an individual is required to have their permit when carrying a gun in public, then it makes sense that they should be required to show it to a law enforcement officer when asked.

I strongly support H.B. 7218, H.B. 7219, H.B. 7223 and S.B. 60 and urge you to favorably vote these bills out of the Judiciary Committee.

Sincerely,  
Charlotte Nelson  
UConn, MPA, 5/2020, UPENN, M.ED, NYU, B.S  
Simsbury, CT