

Re: Testimony in support of **HB-7218 (An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home)**, **HB-7219 (An Act Concerning Ghost Guns)**, **HB-7223 (An Act Concerning the Storage of a Pistol or Revolver in a Motor Vehicle)**, and **SB-60 (An Act Concerning the Presentation of a Carry Permit)**

3/11/2019

To the Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing in support of the following bills:

HB-7218: AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS IN THE HOME

HB-7219: AN ACT CONCERNING GHOST GUNS

HB-7223: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STORAGE OF A PISTOL OR REVOLVER IN A MOTOR VEHICLE

SB-60: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT

As a parent, I am extremely concerned about the risk of unsecured firearms in residential homes. It seems like every day I see a news report of a child who inadvertently shot him/herself or someone close to them, because a firearm was left unsecured with the ammunition in it or nearby. Since millions of children live in a home in the United States where at least one firearm is unsecured, and given the natural curiosity of children and teens alike, the chance of tragedy occurring is all too real. Gun ownership is not a crime, but keeping a gun in a home with children present and not storing it securely, with the ammunition locked separately, should be. Responsible gun owners should not object to safe storage of their weapons and taking all precautions necessary to prevent them from getting into the hands of children and teens and the horrific deaths and injuries that can result.

In addition to being a parent, I am also a clinical psychologist and consider the effects of unsecured weapons in the homes of those with mental health issues. Contrary to popular belief, most people who are suicidal do not actually want to *die*. They just want their emotional pain to go away. Unfortunately, suicide attempts that involve a firearm (vs. pills, knives, etc.) are much more likely to be fatal. This is a particularly worrisome statistic when one considers the impulsivity and short-term thinking that is characteristic of teenagers. Depression in children and adolescents is real, and when their symptoms are severe, they often do not have the perspective to recognize that what seems like a hopeless situation is not. Tragically, nearly 600 children and adolescents die by a gun-related suicide each year. With a law like this one on the books, that number would likely be much, much lower. Please help keep the children and adolescents of Connecticut safe and alive and vote YES on HB-7218.

I am also extremely concerned about 'ghost guns,' which can be assembled with parts purchased on the internet and those made with a 3-D printer. In a nation that has more guns than any other in the world, the last thing we need is guns that do not have a serial number and are untraceable. We need laws such as HB-7219 that will help law enforcement to keep guns out of the hands of those who should not have them, and 'ghost guns' will make their job much more difficult. Please vote YES on HB-7219.

Sincerely,

Allison Sidel, Ph.D
New Milford