

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary

My name is Warren Stevens, I am from Southington. I am also authorized to speak in behalf of the Southington Sportsman's Association, one of the oldest Fish and Game Clubs in CT. We have 400 plus members and with family members represent a voting block of approximately of 1,600 people who believe in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment.

I am here to support:

S.B. 940 AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN PERSONS TO CARRY HANDGUNS IN STATE PARKS AND FORESTS.

H.B. 5227 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF FIREARMS BY MUNICIPALITIES

H.B. 5870 AN ACT CONCERNING TRANSFER OF ASSAULT WEAPONS AND LARGE CAPACITY MAGAZINES

I am here to oppose:

S. B. 60 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF A CARRY PERMIT

H.B. 7219 AN ACT CONCERNING GHOST GUNS

H. B. 7218 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS IN THE HOME

H.B 7223 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STORAGE OF A PISTOL OR REVOLVER IN A MOTOR VEHICLE

I realize that the last 2 bills on safe storage came about because of Ethan Song. From the newspaper and news reports I have seen, there was a lack of judgement and firearms knowledge that resulted in a death. This could have been prevented with a basic firearms safety course presented in schools. When I told my teenager this story, the reply was "It's sad he had to die but why was he playing with a firearm." I sincerely wish that Ethan was alive today so that I could spend an hour with him, with his parent's permission, and teach him basic firearms safety, not shooting. Maybe he would still be alive if this could have happened. I know that CCDL, NSSF and the NRA all have basic firearms safety knowledge / classes available for schools. So instead of pushing another punitive law after the fact, that would punish law abiding firearms owners, we should get ahead of this problem and teach firearms safety in schools. Maybe this would save the next Ethan Song.

In 1990, CT. passed PUBLIC ACT 90-144 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF OWNERS OF FIREARMS WITH RESPECT TO CHILDREN. Sections 4 and 5 called for the Board of Ed and the CT Police Chiefs Association to develop firearms safety programs for public schools, grade kindergarten to 8. To my knowledge this was never done.

Regarding the small gun safes being promoted by the gun control advocates. The are completely ineffective and quite frankly useless. I have enclosed two video links from You Tube that show how quickly and easily they can be broken into. The first one shows a person defeating the lock mechanism with a Bic pen in approximately 30 seconds while using one hand. The second shows a person breaking into one with common household tools in approximately 3-4 minutes while narrating. The safety cable is cut in a few seconds with common household pliers. These will not stop a criminal or aggressive teenager.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-H3fP1cw6rY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIWohNkb09c>



March 9, 2019

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

My name is Barbara Chernoff Chupp, I am from Guilford, CT. I am a parent and I am outraged. There is not a single reason I can muster for any of member of Committee not to support 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. These bills are long overdue. It is up to you. Your vote can save hundreds of lives. Now is the time. Please do the right thing and vote in favor of these bills.

Ethan Song's death was preventable. So were the deaths of so many innocent children, and others. The grieving family members who are left behind, with gaping holes in their hearts and lives, must live the rest of their days knowing that their children's deaths were 100% preventable because in so many of these cases, lax gun storage was the sole reason for these senseless deaths.

Here is what we know:

- Every day, eight children are unintentionally shot or killed by a gun.
- On average, a gun is stolen in the U.S. every two minutes.
- It's estimated that from 2012 to 2015 more than 2,600 firearms were stolen in Connecticut.
- Evidence suggests that most gun thefts are from owners who leave them unsecured in unlocked homes or cars.
- Studies show that most guns recovered from crime scenes were stolen.
- More than 80% of child firearm suicides use a gun belonging to a family member.
- In 75% of cases, guns used in school shootings came from the shooter's home or that of a relative.
- Research by the American Academy of Pediatrics shows where gun laws are strictest half as many children die from firearms.
- Studies show that child access prevention laws, and safe storage in general, reduce the risk of adolescent suicide. One found that keeping a gun locked lowers the risk of both unintentional injury and suicide for children and teenagers by 73%.
- Evidence suggests that most gun thefts are from owners who leave them unsecured in unlocked homes or cars.

**Securely stored firearms—whether loaded or not—would prevent most of these tragedies.** We need to send a clear message to irresponsible gun owners:

- Lock up your firearms when they're not in your control or be held accountable. Locking firearms will not inhibit gun owner's ability to protect themselves: biometric (fingerprint reader) technology, safes and gun locks are widely available that can be opened in seconds, with backup release with a key should the biometric technology ever fail.
- Unload your firearms! Unloaded firearms that are not safely stored can be deadly too. Ethan could be here right now and his family would not be broken hearted if his friend's dad had properly and safely stored his unloaded gun. And, guns that are stolen can be easily loaded and used in crimes.



I also support HB 7219. We cannot let prohibited individuals evade background checks by making guns at home and we cannot let untraceable DIY guns flow into the black market to end up in the hands of criminals. There is no valid reason for letting people evade Connecticut gun laws by making it possible to assemble untraceable guns at home without passing a background check or getting a gun permit. The threat to public safety is real. Ghost guns have been used in mass shootings, in attacks on law enforcement and have been seized in criminal investigations, including here in CT. we are relying on you to act because there is no plan to regulate ghost guns or 3D printed guns at the federal level.

Finally, I support S.B. 60 because I have a right to feel safe in public. Allowing police officers to see the permit of someone carrying a gun in public is a simple measure to protect public safety. Carrying guns in public is associated with higher levels of violence. It's a public safety issue and law enforcement can't do their job if they aren't allowed to see the permit that a legal gun owner must carry.

Our lives, and the lives of our children, depend on you. I strongly support H.B. 7218, H.B. 7219 and S.B. 60 and urge you to favorably vote on these bills.

Sincerely,

Barbara Chernoff Chupp  
Guilford, CT 06436

