TO: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Subject: Opposition to CT House Bill HB5040

I oppose the subject bill, if, for no other reason, than to say it is a naked attack on my inalienable right to self defense vis a vis unduly impeding my ability to keep and bear arms. As I’m sure you’re aware, the government is specifically forbidden to do this as codified in the second amendment to the US Constitution. Article First, Section 15, of the Connecticut Constitution also clearly and with no ambiguity codifies this right on Citizens of this state.

The aforementioned reason should be enough for opposition, but I suspect there are many proponents who will obfuscate the argument, so I’ll provide some additional points against this bill.

Such a tax is egregious, arbitrary, capricious and punitive. The stated purpose of the bill “To establish an excise tax on ammunition to increase funding for gun violence prevention and reduction efforts” has no accompanying rationale, studies or data to support the bill, and is, in my opinion, disingenuous. The last attempt was an arbitrary 50%. This time around you’re trying for 35%. Why? You expect to raise ~7M in annual revenue? How? What are the figures based on? Do they include expected behavioral changes in purchases (or maybe that’s what you’re really after)? Where is the demonstrated need for the purpose? Why not propose a poll tax with the funding targeted at voter education? Why not propose an opinion tax to fund responsible exercise of free speech?

Such a tax is inherently racist. The tax will affect less affluent citizens disproportionately and jeopardize the safety of law abiding low income/minorities who live in higher crime areas by impeding their ability to defend themselves. But then again, that may be part of an agenda to further erode rights.

This law has the potential to reduce safety. Responsible owners of firearms strive to achieve and then maintain proficiency with their firearms which enhances overall safety. Proficiency comes from among other things, live fire practice. This tax could degrade proficiency. But then again, that may be part of an agenda to further erode rights.

Again, I vehemently oppose this tax and any efforts of elected representatives violating their oath of office to uphold the constitution by proposing unconstitutional “legislation”.

Sincerely,

John Bernier