26 February 2020

Senator Fonfara and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to HB 5040. I am a law-abiding citizen of the State of Connecticut, a woman, a veteran educator, and a student and instructor of martial arts. I have held a valid pistol permit for years, and am an advocate among my friends and family for safe, responsible handling and storage of firearms. I belong to a pistol range, where I train to safely handle and accurately shoot my firearm. I believe, in line with our state constitution, that everyone has the right and responsibility to protect themselves and their loved ones from harm.

As a teacher and martial artist, I am familiar with the importance of repeated practice to gain skill. Rarely do we come across an individual with natural talent and ability. For the majority of humans, proficiency comes with repeated, deliberate practice. Maintaining that acquired skill requires more repeated, deliberate practice.

House Bill 5040 does not serve to make the citizens of Connecticut safer by attempting to limit access to ammunition through excessive, punitive tax. It does just the opposite. This bill would make ammunition prohibitively expensive for individuals to put in the practice required for accurate and safe defensive shooting. With proper practice and training, we are all made safer. This practice requires a considerable number of rounds of ammunition - just an hour of deliberate training might send 200 rounds down range. This House Bill would do nothing to deter the criminal who cares nothing about building skill and safe handling practices, and buys ammunition only for the sake of harming others. It disproportionately punishes those among us - women, minorities, those in the LGBT community - who most need the training and protection.

Further, the Connecticut Constitution states "Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state." (Art. I, § 15). The US Constitution second amendment also extends that "right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." This House Bill absolutely infringes on both our state and federal constitutional rights, and on our responsibility to be safe and well-trained lawful gun-owners.

I stand against House Bill 5040, for the safety of the citizens of this State.

Katie Boiteau
New Britain, CT