Testimony Supporting

HB 5040, An Act Establishing an Excise Tax on Ammunition

Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee
February 27, 2020

Good afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Rojas and members of the committee. CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is the state’s leading voice for victims of domestic violence and those who serve them. Our 18 member organizations provide essential services to nearly 40,000 victims of domestic violence each year. Services provided include 24-hour crisis response, emergency shelter, safety planning, counseling, support groups and court advocacy.

We urge your support of HB 5040.

This bill would establish a 35% excise tax on ammunition. The funds generated from this tax would be used to fund evidence based gun violence prevention and reduction programs. This would provide programs the resources they need to provide support to communities affected by gun violence.

Currently gun violence costs Connecticut 1.2 billion dollars a year and poses serious risks to our communities. We are already paying for the consequences. In order to address the issue of gun violence in our state, programs that are doing the work every day need the resources to support the communities most impacted.

Victims of domestic violence are just one of the many groups seriously impacted by gun violence. Since 2000 Connecticut has had an average of 14 intimate partner homicides annually and firearms are the most commonly used weapon in these homicides. Research has shown that when a firearm is involved in a domestic violence assault it is 12 times more likely to result in death than those involving other weapons or bodily force. Research has also shown that women in an abusive relationship are more likely to be killed if their abuser has access to a firearm. Funding for gun violence prevention would provide more resources to support victims in these dangerous situations.

There are three evidence based gun violence prevention and reduction programs. The first is Street Outreach Programs that work with those at risk of committing or becoming the victim of gun violence. The second is Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs which provide trauma care and case management in the hospital when there is an incident of gun violence. The third is Focused Deterrence Strategies which coordinates law enforcement, service providers, and community efforts to work with individuals most at risk of committing violent acts. All of these programs have a specific target and role but all have the potential to provide critical support to survivors of domestic violence. The funding generated from this proposed bill would ensure that these types of programs have the resources they need to do their important work.

We strongly urge your support of HB 5040. Thank you for your consideration.

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