CT Legislators,

I am appalled though not shocked several politicians have decided to propose yet another financial burden upon the taxpayers of this state under the guise of improving Connecticut. I appeal to your common sense to stop H.B. 5040, a bill that seeks to infringe upon the constitutional rights of our law-abiding citizens. Selective and excessive taxation of any product serves to curtail purchases of that product while putting increased financial burdens on the consumer. In the case of firearm ammunition, H.B. 5040 fails the citizens of this State in four ways.

The first failure of H.B. 5040 is that it would directly infringe upon the constitutional right of citizens’ functional access to firearms and firearms related materials. Putting forth a hindrance such as a 35% tax, though not a ban, is still unconstitutional.

The second failure of H.B. 5040 would be that it in no way would prevent any sort of criminal activity. With the current law requiring a consumer to show their firearms permit to buy ammunition, only law-abiding citizens will be paying the tax.

The third failure is the almost certain fact any monies collected would not be spent on gun safety and would end up in Connecticut’s general fund. Just like gas taxes and, as most recently demonstrated by a lawsuit against the state, $145,000,000 ($145M) extracted from taxpayers under the guise of being allocated to a Clean Energy Fund. Our own courts have ruled the state is under no obligation to spend taxpayer dollars in accordance with the remarked intent.

The fourth failure is the economic cost. Ammunition buyers will make large purchases out of state hence depriving local stores of revenue. Any additional taxes paid by CT consumers decrease the discretionary income they use for their families, savings and continuing to deal with living in one of the higher cost of living states in the country.

In summary, H.B.5040 is nothing more than a punitive tax put forth by those looking for political gain while hurting law abiding taxpayers and responsible gun owners.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opposing testimony regarding this bill.

Respectfully,

Steven Cohn