Dear members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee:

I am strongly opposed to increasing the cost of gun safety training!

Safe handling of a firearm in a defensive scenario, and we all do have that right to be armed for self-defense (it says so in the first Article 15, Section 15 of the CT constitution “SEC. 15. Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state.”).

Proper training is expensive, and such training requires 500 to 1000 rounds in a single session of safety training. That’s about $400 in ammunition, or $540 with your excise tax. That’s in addition to the cost of the training.

Regular range time for responsible gun owners is an important aspect of firearm-owning responsibility. The term “well-regulated” as defined in the Second Amendment actually means being able to shoot straight with a properly functioning firearm. In addition to the current $25 an hour for use of a range, a typical session uses up 200 to 500 rounds.

A regressive tax will have a disproportional impact closely aligned with race and household income. This bill simply punishes a group of 275,000 Connecticut permit holders and ammunition permit holders who have all passed background checks and represent the single largest criminal free block of voters in the State! Please consider that, and be fair to the lower income citizens priced out of needed safety training.

This excise tax unfairly taxes a right guaranteed by the Federal and Connecticut constitutions. How is this any different than a poll tax, requiring a fee to be able to vote? Taxing a right is, well, very wrong.

Discard this bill and do not pass it on for a vote, it’s the same as a poll tax.

Do not tax a constitutional right.

Bill Hillman
Bethel, CT