My Name is Dave Lawcock. I am from Guilford CT. I am opposed to HB 5040. This proposed 35% tax is nothing more than a back-door attempt at gun control. I along with the many people you see here today am tired of the constant attacks on our constitutional right to keep and bear arms. Law abiding citizens such as myself and the many others who have written testimony or attend the hearing on the 27th are not the problem, yet we are being treated that way.

I am an certified NRA Range Safety Officer.

This unreasonable ammo tax will infringe on their ability to practice and train. It will also hurt the small businesses that sell ammunition. People will end up buying less ammunition which means they will train less and overall, be less competent with handling their firearms as a result. This is especially detrimental to new shooters. Also consider that consumers will no doubt take the short ride to neighboring states to purchase ammunition there, harming small businesses in CT.

As for the gun violence rate in CT, the overall murder rate where a firearm is used has been determined to be 2 per 100,000 people. The urban areas Rep. Gillibrand is concerned; Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, and Bridgeport have a rate of 7.3 per 100,000 people. Obviously they are over represented where gun crime is concerned. Representative Gilchrest has called attention to these areas and clearly there is a problem in these urban areas that needs to be addressed. But just as we would not address the opioid death problem by attaching a 35% excise tax on legitimate prescriptions, or the traffic fatalities rate by adding a 35% excise tax on cars or gasoline, this tax unfairly penalizes law abiding citizens who are not part of the problem. Essentially, we are being charged a fee to exercise our 2nd amendment right. What is next? An excise tax on free speech? The solution to the urban gun violence problem in these few municipalities is increased economic opportunities along with vastly increased enforcement as a deterrent to crimes committed with a gun. It is well known that in the majority of cases, gun charges are dropped where they should not be. The solution does not lie in funding organizations that seek to brainwash the public that guns are evil and create a social stigma around firearm ownership. The examples that I mentioned above illustrate the unfairness of this bill and can be found when looking at the rate of deaths due to opioid abuse in CT. We do not impose an additional tax on citizens who have legitimate need and are prescribed opioids by their doctors. They are not the problem and the opioid death rate of around 8 per hundred thousand exceeds the gun murder rate of 2 per 100,000 in CT. The same example can be found when we look at drunk driving fatalities. We don't impose a penalty on all drivers because of the irresponsible acts of a few. We enforce our traffic laws and drunk drivers have their driving privileges removed. We punish the offenders in that case, not the law abiding. In closing, I
would ask you to be more serious about the gun violence problem in the above-mentioned urban areas. Senator Rob Sampson has repeatedly made proposals that would be have much greater impact on the problem without imposing an unfair tax on citizens that are not responsible for those problems. Please revisit his proposals. They are on the record

Thank you.