Dear members of the House Legislature:

Article 1, Section 15 of the CT constitution is clear "Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state"

We all interpret things differently; we all have our own backgrounds and points of view and I respect that. I think we all agree that gun violence is a bad thing. But taxing our constitutional right to bear arms is not the way to prevent it.

The authors of our Constitutions, both state and federal, believed this right to be so foundational that they included it in both of these important governing documents. I, and many others take this very seriously and believe that gun ownership is a great responsibility. I own firearms to protect myself and my family. To me, there is no greater responsibility than to keep my family safe. Does that mean I leave my doors unlocked, waiting to use my gun, of course not, it is the final line of defense, but it is a critical one.

Proper training in order to be a responsible gun owner is expensive. Any reasonable range session will expend around 200 rounds of ammunition. The cost of the ammunition is already on top of the expense of the range time (25+ dollars per hour). This does not account for the training sessions with a trainer, which is even more costly and use twice as much ammunition than a personal range visit. We spend this money, and we take this time so that we are well trained in case God forbid we are required to use force to protect ourselves or our families.

Will this bill prevent me from training altogether? No, but it will limit how much I can. But I am very fortunate, there are many people who live in worse areas and make less money than I, and this bill will prevent them from protecting themselves, or at least being trained well enough to do it successfully. This tax punishes the group to CT gun permit holders and ammunition permit holders who have already paid fees and passed background checks. We are not the criminals, otherwise we would not have gun permits. Please consider that this tax makes it even more difficult to afford the range time and safety training that is required to be a responsible gun owner.

When you are defending yourself and your family trying to stay alive, praying the police will get to you faster, you are already behind. That’s the nature of being defensive. It requires more practice and training to defend than it does to attack because you must respond to the bad guy’s first move. Please do not make that even harder by taxing our constitutional right to defend ourselves.

Thank you for your time and your consideration

Eric Lindemann