February 22, 2020

We strongly oppose HB 5040

As the owner and manager of Blue Trail Range Corporation, we strongly oppose HB5040. This tax on ammunition targets law abiding Connecticut citizens in a discriminatory fashion who have already been through a comprehensive background check that allows them to purchase ammunition. This proposed bill would negatively impact citizens that lawfully participate in recreational shooting and hunting activities who have paid for permits to the State of Connecticut that are required to purchase ammunition.

This proposed bill to tax ammunition would have an adverse effect on numerous small businesses in Connecticut. As a family owned and operated business that has been in the State for over 75 years, we already face significant challenges from on-line competitors. Placing an additional 35 percent tax on one of our bestselling commodities would have a detrimental economic impact on our business. We work hard to provide support to other Connecticut small businesses by carrying products made in our State and give assistance to civic groups and nonprofit organizations within our community. The estimates for revenue that would be earned under this bill are significantly overestimated, because it would incentivize people to go to neighboring states where they would legally purchase their ammunition at a much lower price.

This proposed bill would also negatively impact our junior rifle program. This is a well-established and respected program that provides safety training in the use of firearms to youths from all over the State. While there are no specific programs articulated in HB 5040, this program, which has been in existence for decades, teaches responsibility, sportsmanship and for some, a path to college through scholarships through participation in the shooting sports.

House Bill 5040, which imposes a discriminatory tax on a law-abiding segment of Connecticut’s population, would negatively impact Connecticut small businesses, overestimates the revenue it would generate and would adversely affect youth programs that promote firearms safety in the State. Due to these reasons, we strongly oppose HB 5040.

Respectfully,

Deborah W. Lyman, Owner/president

Kyle Overturf, Manager