Ladies and Gentlemen of the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee

My name is Brendan Malone, and I am asking you to oppose HB5040 An act concerning an excise tax on ammunition.

For several years now I have had the honor of serving on the CRCOG Regional Planning Commission, I currently serve as vice chairman. The topic of firearms has never been at the forefront of what we typically deal with, as I’m sure is a similar situation with yours being a committee that deals with fiscal issues.

We handle issues of a broad spectrum. Transportation, education, the environment, the list goes on. The focus of what I would like to address in my testimony today, is that of economic sustainability. I believe that if this excise tax is allowed to be implemented, a majority of consumers will travel, and purchase their ammunition in another state. This will not only give any sales tax revenue we could have seen to another jurisdiction, but could also result in the loss of those businesses, should the lost revenue from ammunition sales be high enough to impact these companies’ bottom line.

I would like to share some information I have learned after some brief research about the fiscal benefits of lawful firearm ownership. According to John Dunham and Associates (New York) Dec 2016 report on Direct Impacts of Firearms Manufacture, the industry employs 141,500 people, while suppliers and ancillary industries employ 159,623 persons in support of that. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Dec 2016 report puts the national median income of these workers at $50,423 in wages and benefits, with Connecticut residents in this industry earning an average of $75,708. Nationwide as of 2016, the industry is responsible for $51.3 billion in annual economic activity, with states collecting an average of $2.7 billion in business taxes. Finally, this may come as a surprise to you, as it was to me, to learn that in terms of total economic output per capita, as of 2016 Connecticut is ranked 9th highest. To put that into a real number, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation’s 2017 Firearms and Ammunition Industry Fiscal Impact Report, we have a total output of $1,245,480,500.

As a resident, and a public servant I cannot stand by and watch further economic deterioration take over this state. Any loss of revenue is too much. This bill will do nothing to stop crime, as it is already illegal for a criminal to purchase a firearm or ammunition. In my opinion, this will only take away from the already desperate financial situation that we are currently in.

Please, oppose HB5040.

Respectfully,
Brendan Malone
Suffield, CT