My name is Matthew Winters and I am from Burlington, CT and I OPPOSE HB 5040, an act establishing an excise tax on ammunition.

This bill is yet another discriminatory attack on the citizens of the State of Connecticut who believe in their rights to defend themselves with the means that they deem fit, and those who enjoy the sport of shooting as a past-time. Representative Gilchrest has said that she believes that the citizens who partake in guns, in whatever way, should help foot the bill to help combat the damage they can do in the wrong hands. Yet, she has not specified where the money would be going. There is not a state-run group that actively combats gun violence. She has not said it will be going to the police to form a task force to combat illegal guns, especially in the cities where the crime rates are high. So what does that leave? That means the money either will not be used in the intended ways, or it will go to Anti-Gun political lobbyist groups. I do not want my money going to groups who do not share my beliefs, and the government should not be funneling my money to such groups. If I wanted my money to go to them, I would donate it.

I would also like to raise the point that if Representative Gilchrest is so concerned about gun violence in our state, why isn't she making her first priority to enforce the laws we already have on the books? Down to the most basic laws that prohibit forms of violence in general. We see too many violent offenders being given plea bargains or having their cases dismissed all together. Why aren't they being prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law? Yet when someone is found in violation of some of these new laws, like the CT mother who was arrested recently due to reporting her stolen handgun that she kept in her nightstand because that violated Ethan's Law. She was the victim of a crime. If keeping her gun in her nightstand is what made her feel safe and feel like she could adequately defend her children, that is her choice to make. Now she is being punished for being a victim because of a law that is telling her she cannot choose what is best for her. The state should be giving her the leniency, not violent offenders.

I will be paying close attention to who supports and opposes this bill. Anyone who votes to pass this bill will never receive my vote come election time. I will also actively partake in making sure that they do not get re-elected, even if they are not in my district. I have no problem volunteering my time to support candidates, even outside of my district, who support the 2nd Amendment which SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED!

- Matthew Winters