I am writing in opposition to proposed HB 5040 An act establishing an excise tax on ammunition.

This puts an unfair burden on law abiding citizens, and interferes with our shooting sports, and ability to maintain proficiency with our firearms.

You currently need a firearms permit or an ammo permit to purchase ammo legally in the state (which I think is an illegal over reach, but that is another discussion for another time). The state should be able to show statistics on how many of those involved in shootings & robberies had permits and obtained the ammo (or the gun) legally. I’d suspect that it is an extremely low percentage, if not ZERO.

In your Office of Legislative Research report “Gun Crimes in Connecticut Municipalities” (George Miles, Dec 2018), between 2013 and 2017, the big 5 municipalities racked up 233 murders, 3,392 robberies, and 2,687 aggravated assaults with firearms. It would be interesting to know how many of those were prosecuted. Also: 1.) how many were committed by legal gun owners, 2.) how many were committed with stolen firearms, and 3.) how many were repeat offenders or felons that were ALREADY PROHIBITED from owning firearms

Statewide in the same 2013-2017 period, in your Office of Legislative Research report “Case Statistics for firearms related offenses (Dispositions)” (Michelle Kirby, Sr Legislative Atty, Aug 2018), several hundred charges ranging from possessing a dangerous weapon on school grounds, carrying a dangerous weapon, illegal possession of a weapon in a vehicle were dismissed with several hundred other cases being nolled.

The reasoning behind this proposal is 100% faulty. The criminals that have caused this crisis will not buy ammo in a manner in which they will be affected by the tax. So those that are causing the issue, get away scot free and leave the rest of us holding the bag, yet again.

All this will do is punish law abiding gun owners. What is next – a 35% tax on hospital visits to help pay for all the Narcan that the state has to dispense on drug related police calls?

If you REALLY want to address the issue of gun violence – you need to pass legislation that increases penalties for crimes involving guns – and urge your prosecutors to stop dropping gun charges and stop plea bargaining. Send the message (to the shooters, gangs, etc) that gun crimes are serious, make people do hard time, and maybe you will see a decrease. But punishing law abiding citizens is not the answer – it’s the lazy, easy way out for politicians who are trying to “do something” so they can stay in office.

I urge to you oppose this faulty legislation.

Wayne Petroskey
Killingworth