Oppose HB5040

My name is Dennis Roy. I currently live in Milford, CT and I oppose HB5040. The following is my testimony:

The fastest way to get someone’s attention is to kick them in the pocketbook.

You have my attention.

I am 58 years old. Father of two boys. Married to the same woman for 30 years. I got my first rifle, handed down from my Grandfather to my Mother, who handed it down to me when I was 8 years old. I still have that rifle. I've lived in Connecticut all my life. My wife and I love it here, but we are already looking for some place else to retire.

The tax burden here is too much and it continues to grow. Even though we have a State Lottery, a State Income Tax and revenue from the Casinos we still have a crumbling infrastructure and growing deficit. The numbers never seem to add up to enough.

So let’s take a look at the numbers presented here for HB5040. The projected revenue per year is $7,000,000 dollars. I've seen a couple of news reports with different numbers. One had ammunition at $50/ box, another had it at $5/ box. Neither number is accurate so I’m pretty sure the numbers you have for an end result are also wrong. However, I will use your numbers for the sake of argument. Most standard handgun ammo is 50 rounds per box. At $50 per box, that would be $1 per round. $7 million in revenue @ 35% would be $20,000,000 in sales. $20M in sales at $1/ round would be 20M rounds per year that Sportsmen, Target and Competition shooters in CT are buying. Let me say that again, 20 million rounds.

I ask; why is the problem of gun violence not much greater? Because the law abiding gun owners of the state are not the problem.

In an exchange of words between Representative Gilchrest and a Member of the CCDL I noticed a disturbing theme. The Legislatures who proposed this tax see no difference between the law abiding gun owners of this State and the criminals. That is a problem. We are not criminals. Unfortunately, it appears there are elected officials who have not educated themselves about guns, making laws about guns. The comment “how many bullets do you need?” was bantered in reaction to pushback on this bill. The answer is simple. One should be proficient with his or her firearm. To become proficient requires practice. I don’t know anyone I shoot with or compete against who isn’t trying to better their skills. You don’t understand that? I don’t understand why people play golf but I’m sure their reasons are similar.

Make no mistake, this is a punitive tax aimed not at criminals but at the law abiding gun owners of CT. Allow me to present a hypothetical scenario. I don’t have the figures for the last couple years but in 2017 278 people were killed in drunk driving accidents in Connecticut. In order to keep that from happening let’s hypothetically pass a law making it mandatory for all CT residents to pay for a Breathalyzer machine to be installed in all our cars. Money would have to come out of the pockets of all CT residents who own and drive automobiles. In other words, CT residents would have to pay for the actions of others, through no fault of their own. This is how I view the proposed ammo tax HB 5040.
This ammo tax was proposed in last years session at a rate of 50% but failed to make it out of Committee. This year is is proposed at 35%. I also understand that the “program to diffuse gun violence” that this tax revenue is intended for is rumored to be a special interest group that advocates for gun control. Not education, not gun safety programs. The hipocracy of taxing law abiding citizens of CT, who are already paying for their right to bear arms thru required permits and certificates, to fund a pet project of a certain sect of politicians is unconscionable and unjust. It is a little too much like asking me to pay for the rope you intend to use to hang me.

I urge you to Vote against this Bill before it gets out of Committee.

Thank you for your time and service.

Dennis Roy
Milford, CT