February 26, 2020

Dear Honorable Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

My name is Holly Sullivan and I am the President of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League. Our organization proudly advocates for the rights of more than 270,000 law abiding gun owners in this state and 35,000 members in our organization. I am here today to adamantly oppose HB 5040.

This proposed tax is a direct penalty to individuals who are not responsible for the actions of others. However, the misguided scheme of this bill is far more dangerous than just that and will have contrary impact than it claims. While this proposed bill may feel like it is “doing something”, it is directly conflicting with actual common sense implementation of gun safety and will put more Connecticut residents at risk.

Accurate shooting is a skill that requires practice. Safe handling skills and proficiency are developed at the range. Gun owners will often put hundreds of rounds in a day through their firearms developing the muscle memory to ensure that in a stressful situation, they will be still be accurate. This tax will make practice cost prohibitive…. for some. This proposed bill will absolutely have a disproportionate impact on low income Connecticut residents. Gun safety will be reduced in the very communities it claims to be supporting.

The sponsor of this bill has stated that Connecticut gun owners must share in the cost of gun violence. Respectfully, gun owners in this state are no less empathetic or human than any other group of people in this state. We do not feel any less pain when we hear of incidents of violence of any sort in our communities. We share in the same financial liabilities as every other resident of this state. The shameful pitting of neighbor against neighbor, owner against non-owner and who owes what will never be a constructive solution to violence in society.

Not only would HB 5040 make Connecticut residents less safe, it will also result in a significant financial loss to the state further resulting in absolute failure of its intended purpose. I can say with absolute confidence that our people are incredibly resolute. Currently, Connecticut collects sales tax on the sale of ammunition. From the time that I was only 8 years old, I would sit at my father’s workbench with him and reload ammunition. Not only will anti-gun organizations not realize the financial benefit of this tax but Connecticut can expect a drastic reduction in overall sales tax revenue from ammunition. Connecticut gun owners will not subjugated into financially supporting this politically driven agenda.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Holly Sullivan
President, Connecticut Citizens Defense League
Southbury, CT