I oppose HB 6816, AN ACT CONCERNING MICROSTAMPING-ENABLED PISTOLS, RAISING THE AGE TO PURCHASE AMMUNITION AND RESTRICTING THE SALE AND POSSESSION OF BODY ARMOR.

While the technology behind durable microstamping does not even exist yet, the completely misses the mark of dealing with crime in Connecticut. The premise is that by identifying either expended casings or projectiles presumes 1) the microstamping will continue to work through the life of the weapon, 2) that recovering these components will lead authorities to the perpetrator.

There is so much wrong with the assumptions of the technology I won't cover it here, as it's well documented, and because it's irrelevant. The real flaw in the logic is the presumption that crimes are committed by a legal gun owner, rather than someone using a stolen gun which. We know the overwhelming majority of gun crimes are committed with stolen guns. Therefore, the link between the legal owner and the perpetrator is either 1) unknown, providing no useful information or, 2) known as part of apprehending the accused with a stolen gun prior to the crime, in which case we should hope he/she is disarmed prior to a crime.

I challenge anyone to present a scenario where law enforcement would connect the shooter to the theft of the gun without already being able to prove the shooter is guilty of that attack. Knowing who owned the gun legally before it entered the underworld of crime is as useful as knowing who sold a drunk driver their vehicle.

All that effort and cost is a waste of effort when in fact the solution lies in increasing the consequences of illegally obtaining, carrying and using firearms. Across all firearms crimes in CT, the current prosecution rate is a dismal 30%[1]. Theft of a firearm is prosecuted only 29% of the time. The much more serious Firearms Trafficking is only prosecuted 36% of the time, Carrying Without a Permit 50%. When we have a system where stealing, selling, and carrying illegal guns presents a low risk of prosecution, unsurprisingly we see these behaviors flourish.

Raising the age to purchase ammunition is equally ineffective. Thousands of CT residents under 21 participate in hunting, competitive shooting and informal target shooting without no negative consequences. CT already, unfortunately requires a permit just to purchase ammunition, assuring that virtually all, if not all, ammunition used in crimes is stolen or otherwise illegally procured. Again, the focus on the law-abiding actors, rather than those perpetrating crimes is the problem.

Lastly, body armor is a passive, defensive object. To believe that somehow crime will be reduced by banning it's sale or purchase is befuddling at best.

I urge the Committee to reject HB 6816 and focus on attacking crime from the enforcement and prosecution side. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard.

Tom Maloney

North Stonington, CT

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[1] Case Statistics for Firearms - Related Offenses (Dispositions) By: Michelle Kirby, Senior Legislative Attorney February 25, 2020 | 2020-R-0088.