

Barry Miller

Ladies and gentlemen of the General Assembly, my name is Barry Miller. I am a Farmington, Connecticut native, a certified Emergency Medical Technician, a recent graduate of the University of Connecticut, and perhaps most importantly, a registered voter. I am here today to voice my disapproval of all proposed bills further limiting the Second Amendment rights of Connecticut residents, including, but not limited to, the following proposed bills: HB-6260, HB-5112, HB-5268, HB-5647, and SB-122.

I do support the common sense proposals introduced by Representative Rob Sampson of Wolcott, including HB-5952 (An Act Increasing the Penalty for the Unlawful Possession of a Firearm), as well as his proposed act allowing School Boards to permit school personnel to possess weapons on school grounds. The policies suggested by Rep. Sampson are capable of actually making our society safer, as opposed to creating more helpless victims. Rep. Sampson's proposals would not impose unjust limitations upon the residents of Connecticut to exercise their Second Amendment right. His proposals also have the added economic benefit of avoiding the class stratification that would result from introducing absurd taxes on firearms and ammunition, which would prevent those of middle- and lower-class incomes from being able to afford to defend themselves.

As a first responder, I recognize there will always be a criminal element which will choose to disobey the established laws, and possess firearms regardless of the bans placed upon those who respect the rule of law. In this regard, I would like to express my displeasure for HB-6260, which I am against in its entirety; however, the portion regarding the criminalization civilian possession of ballistic vests is particularly offensive. Ballistic vests are sufficient protection for our police officers, our soldiers, and suspects awaiting trial, but are too good to protect our loved ones and medical first responders? Many first responders, especially in urban areas, make the decision every day to wear preventative ballistic vests to protect themselves from illegal firearms, firearms that will most assuredly be carrying more than ten, or seven, or however many bullets magazines are arbitrarily limited to. How will this make our society any safer? The simple truth is that it won't. Firearm laws are already on the books, and are ignored by criminals every day. As recently seen in Webster, New York, a convicted felon, and obviously deranged man, was able to obtain firearms illegally and turn them onto unsuspecting Fire and Emergency Medical personnel.

Blaming firearms for the violence we witness in our communities will solve nothing, and fails to address the underlying causes for the violence; namely, the lack of mental health support, gang activity, the lack of a sensible drug policy, and overwhelming poverty in urban areas due to lack of education. These are the issues which governmental policy must be directed towards. If we continue ignoring these issues, while reducing an individual's ability to defend him or herself, we will only cause our society to become less safe for those citizens who obey the law.

Thank you for your time,

Barry Miller