

January 23, 2013

Committee Members,

As a Law Abiding gun owner within the state of CT, I would like to express my opinion and preferred direction for this Gun Violence Prevention Working Group (I have noted my support or opposition to the bills below). I will not refer to, more than this one, that the "right to bear arms" is part of both our State and Federal Constitution, and I believe in that right.

The tragedy in Newtown, CT was unspeakable. A depraved act of cowardice and violence that is beyond my human comprehension, not to mention being a father of 2 children myself. This act was not that of a gun nor the type of gun used, it was a criminal act executed by an obviously sick person (unfortunately, we do not have the CSP report yet, and won't for months to come). The demonization of semi-automatic firearms in recent weeks is sickening to me, as these are not military type nor "assault" weapons. A weapon is an "assault weapon" only when it is used in an assault, never more.

I do agree that the local and national conversations need to occur; yet, meaningless legislation will not solve this problem at all, as criminals do not follow our laws. We in CT already have very tough (but fair) gun laws. The imposition of regulations that cannot be complied to by those who own firearms or magazines that become qualified solves no problem at all, other than making some "feel" better. I can support a magazine limitation of 10 rounds (don't like it, but I can support it) for rifles. For handguns, this is problematic in the world of modern semi-auto pistols. Most have magazines that hold, on average, 12-15 rounds, some more, some less. By imposing a law that diminishes the capacity to something less than 15 for a handgun, will immediately make guns owned by 10's of thousands in this state instantly illegal. There needs to be a middle ground here, and I vehemently oppose the law that NY has passed.

The "Assault Weapon" topic is a tender one, no doubt. The means test, for prohibited features, needs to be vetted properly and in consideration of more than just the AR15 platform. Many use a pistol grip on shotguns, as it allows better and safer control of the firearm. For many other guns, the pistol grip and other black "furniture" is just window dressing, and using a Ruger 10/22 as an example, the standard wood stock version is absolutely no different than one with a pistol grip and black stock. They are the same firearm, just one may look "scary" to some people, yet it is simply appearance. Legislating appearance rather than function is something that should be avoided. Most of the prohibited features today are no more than cosmetic, with the exception of a "grenade launcher", but we all know grenades are already regulated heavily by the BATFE and civilians cannot purchase those.

Gun registration should be avoided at all costs, as this is a step that will cause the opposite effect, again, turning many people into unlawful owners (criminals based on previously owned firearms) as fear of confiscation and government intrusion will likely lead to many firearms never being registered. Do not punish law abiding and legal gun owners in this state, we have done nothing wrong.

I urge you to legislate with common sense, fact based information on function, and without emotion. Emotion has no business being leveraged in our law making processes, as it lends to extremism on both sides of an otherwise rational debate and discussion. Once extremism is in play, reason is no longer viable, it's human nature and unavoidable.

In closing, I urge this committee to make recommendations that will have a material effect, and not simply a "feel good" effect for our state. Firearms are not a problem in CT, historically and currently. Sick people not getting the help they need is a problem, locally and nationally. The Sandy Hook atrocity was an aberration in totality, and the crimes and actions of one should not punish the whole. We are smarter than that. We are better than that. Prohibition has never worked as a solution for problems, even partial prohibitions, as was demonstrated in Newton (CT already has an AWB).

- HB-5112 **OPPOSE** AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS HOLDING HANDGUN PERMITS.
- HB-5165 **SUPPORT** AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON'S HOME, MOTOR VEHICLE OR BUSINESS.
- HB-5176 **SUPPORT** AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR A TEMPORARY STATE PERMIT TO CARRY A PISTOL OR REVOLVER.
- HB-5179 **SUPPORT** AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO THE INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE SYSTEM OF THE SPECIAL LICENSING AND FIREARMS UNIT OF THE DIVISION OF STATE POLICE.
- HB-5268 **OPPOSE** AN ACT REQUIRING THE MAINTENANCE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE BY FIREARM OWNERS AND ESTABLISHING A SALES TAX ON AMMUNITION.
- HB-5269 **SUPPORT** AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR CRIMINAL USE OF A FIREARM OR ELECTRONIC DEFENSE WEAPON.
- SB-1 **OPPOSE** AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS FROM VIOLENCE.
- SB-21 **SUPPORT** AN ACT AUTHORIZING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR AN ETERNAL LIGHT IN MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE. **SHOULD BE ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE**
- SB-42 **OPPOSE** AN ACT CONCERNING THE CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF AMMUNITION.
- SB-122 **OPPOSE** AN ACT CONCERNING RESTRICTIONS ON GUN USE.
- SB-124 **OPPOSE** AN ACT BANNING LARGE CAPACITY AMMUNITION MAGAZINES. IF **10 round rifle/15 rounds handgun, I would support**
- SB-140 **OPPOSE** AN ACT CONCERNING LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR FIREARM OWNERS AND SALES TAX ON AMMUNITION.
- SB-161 **OPPOSE** 'AN ACT CONCERNING THE REDUCTION OF GUN VIOLENCE', to reduce gun violence and limit the availability of especially dangerous firearms.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and place into record.

Sincerley,

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