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Connecticut Citizens Defense League, Inc.

January 28th, 2013

Co-Chairs and Members of the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group:

My name is Scott Wilson; I am from New London, CT. I am a Co-Founder and President of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League. Prior to the Sandy Hook tragedy, we had 2,499 members. That was our tally since our formation in February of 2009. Since Sandy Hook, we have added over 1,100 new members. We now have a total of 3,640 as of Jan. 27th. Many of our new members as well as existing members have expressed serious concerns over the historical amount of anti-gun bills that have been introduced since the legislative session began.

You undoubtedly already have, and will hear testimony from many of them today. Many members have also submitted testimony to the Gun Violence Task Force online because they could not attend today's hearing. It is the hopes of our organization (CCDL) that this working group looks to the true causes of the recent attack in Sandy Hook and other recently prolific attacks involving mass casualties. Mere ownership of certain firearms such as semi-automatic rifles or handguns, including those of which can accept a detachable magazine, are owned and used frequently for sporting purposes. These are also perfectly acceptable and useful for home defense purposes.

We are highly concerned with a recent bill that includes the tax proposal for up to 50% (such as SB140) on the cost of ammunition. These proposals will just syphon more money from good law abiding citizens that are already living in one of the most highly taxed states in the country. This will also leave them with less of the ability to safely train and practice. Do we not want lawful gun owners to be safe with their firearms?

We respect the establishing of this task force to investigate what has happened in Sandy Hook and how it can be resolved. However, we are also concerned that this task force may be used as a vehicle to move many of the bills that have been proposed straight to the floor for a vote. A use of an Emergency Certification maneuver on any of the current proposals would not give ample opportunity for us to testify in opposition to what we deem harshly unfair proposals. If these measures are applied, it would be a travesty to our legislative process. I am making this last point especially with consideration that many of us are in the position where we currently must speak in broad generalities not knowing which bills may be raised, or even if they will be raised.

We are also concerned that the Connecticut Council of Municipalities along with the Sandy Hook Commission has been granted standing above and beyond the citizens of Connecticut who are law abiding owners of firearms. Our individual rights should take precedent over their proposals or knee jerk reactions based on the actions of a severely mentally disturbed individual.

In closing, we would also like to extend our deepest heartfelt sympathies to the victims' families.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Wilson, Sr.
CCDL President

Every citizen has a right
to bear arms in defense
of himself and the state.

Connecticut State Constitution, Article First, Section 15