

I would like to express my strong opposition to HB-5112, HB-5268, HB-5452, HB-5647, HB-5651, HB-5654, SB-1, SB-42, SB-122, SB-124, SB-161, SB-377, SB-495, SB-501, and SB-504 (many are redundant).

Allow me to tell you about myself. I came from a broken home, lived in the streets. In my late 20's I put myself through college and trade school. I worked my way up, eventually becoming a technical expert for a world-wide company, then a teacher. I now work as a systems engineer for a company in CT, researching and developing new technologies to bring water to deserts, to reclaim wasted energy, to developing new energy technologies to make a greener planet. I own a home in Haddam and raised a family.

Do you want to make me a criminal?

The bills in question will do just that, along with many thousands of other law abiding gun owners here in CT. They will treat me as a criminal or a felon, and indeed, make me one. My crime? Owning legal rifles and the magazines that they were designed to use.

The Supreme court, in its decision of DC vs. Heller, determined that, referring to the second amendment, it "limits the type of weapon to which the right applies to those used by the militia, i.e., those in common use for lawful purposes." Semi-automatics, and the AR-15 with a 30 round magazine in particular, are in the most common use in America.

The aforementioned bills will make me a criminal, but not just me. It will make thousands of citizens of this state into criminals, people that were the most law abiding and loyal Americans of any group of people. Comply? Many will not. This is against their rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Those that do comply, just slip up once. Will the courts handle it? Will the prisons handle it?

It has always been a gauge of a law, that if a law abiding citizen does nothing and the law will make him a criminal, it is a bad law.

The irony is that, although the bills are designed to reduce crime, it will do nothing to stop crime. On the contrary, it will increase crime.

I've heard the phrase "common sense gun laws" over and over recently. I did a search of CT statutes for firearms, weapons, guns, handguns, and rifles. Do you know how many firearm statutes there are in CT? There are 1,114 gun laws in CT. Not one of them stopped Adam Lanza. Criminals don't obey laws. Maniacal killers don't obey laws. 'Common sense' would dictate that gun laws don't work. It is both unjust and unfair to make thousands of law abiding citizens pay for the crimes of one.

According to FBI statistics for the year 2011, the last year for which they are available, of 128 homicides in CT, 1 was from a rifle. ONE!!! It would seem we are trying to solve a problem that doesn't exist. Six were manual, from strangulation or beating. Interestingly, of 128 homicides, 123 were in Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven, areas of known drug and gang activity.

It would be best to deal with the person that uses the tool, and not the tool. Let's create databases and treat the mentally ill. Please, don't make criminals out of law-abiding citizens.

Don't make me a Criminal.

Dale Bennett