

COALITION OF CONNECTICUT SPORTSMEN

P.O. Box 2506, Hartford, CT 06146, (203) 245-8076

www.ctsportsmen.com

ccsct@comcast.net

TO: Gun Violence Prevention Working Group Public Hearing

January 28, 2013

By: Robert T. Crook, Executive Director

CT sportsmen join the horror, grief and earnest prayer for the families of Newtown who suffered such incomprehensible loss as a result of this unspeakable crime.

We are however outraged by this working group expecting input on 91 proposed gun bills submitted for your consideration which seriously affect competitive shooters, collectors, hunters and for self-protection.

The key question to be asked is what was the cause of this tragedy? Was it school security? Mental Health? Or firearms? Unfortunately, it appears the firearms component, the tool used, appears to have the highest legislative priority. The media has focused on gun bills and the coverage has been overwhelming. We know that CT is rated 5th in the nation with the best gun laws by the national Brady Campaign anti gun group, yet the majority of bills proposed by our legislators are predominately anti-gun issues promoted by Brady, which some legislators appear to be promoting. Many are those that have been defeated previously in CT, e.g., One gun a Month, Ballistic Fingerprinting, Microstamping, Ammunition Purchaser Records, Magazine Ban, all are costly, impractical and do not affect criminal activity. We are also concerned with expansion of the so-called "Assault Weapon" bill. Our message is: It has failed on the national level and the two CT versions have done nothing but restrict legal gunowners, hunters, home defense, and local, state, national and Olympic target shooters. While there is always room for improvement, we currently have good laws without dramatically affecting legal gunowners, who are not the cause of the Newtown tragedy.

What we have not yet seen is any serious proposal addressing the issue of a crazed person committing murder and breaking all current gun laws. Rather we observe this plethora of bills imposing further restrictions on legal gunowners – not one of these gun proposals would have impacted this heinous act or will affect future perpetrators. Gunowners have promoted many of the current gun laws in order to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals, but these current "quick fix", "do something" bills do not address the root cause and actions of the Newtown criminal or address inner-city murders of children, young adults and others which exceed the death toll of Newtown. Gunowners ARE affected.

We recognize many of the 91 gun bills will be rejected as they have in past sessions. We have been told by some legislators that both Mental Health may suffer priority, a state budget responsibility; and school security, a local responsibility, because aid to cities and towns will be cut - that leaves guns as THE solution. We ask you to reject this speculation.

We urge you to not "act quickly" on these issues. Evaluate current gun law; reject becoming "the new standard for the nation" as NY irresponsibly attempted; question what state job and economic impact will be affected in gun stores, Cabela's, and gun companies; and uphold Constitutional rights. Please remember, gunowners ARE the good guys and ladies.

Thank you.