

I'd like to clarify some misinformation that was given as testimony at the State Special Committee hearing on Wednesday night. Connecticut has some of the strictest gun laws in the country. We currently have required background checks, waiting periods and state registration on almost all types of firearms sales. Much of what people are asking for in the wake of Sandy Hook is already on the books in this state:

Current legislation in the state of CT does require background checks for the retail sale of firearms. CT General Statute 29-37a requires the retail seller to submit the purchaser's information to the Commissioner of Public Safety for a criminal history and instances of institutionalization background check prior to the sale of all long guns (rifles), along with a two week waiting period. CT G.S. 29-37L deals with the verification of eligibility of persons to receive or possess firearms, the state database, instant criminal background checks and authorization number required. These sales are all registered with the state. According to reports, this is the legislation that prevented the Sandy Hook murderer from acquiring a rifle of his own prior to 12/14/12, likely under 29-36L (D)(2) which deals with shared information with the Department Mental Health and Addiction Services. Gun show vendors are still held to the same standard as store vendors. All sales, transfers or exchanges taking place at a Gun Show require the seller to obtain an authorization number from the Special Licensing and Firearms Unit. Exempt from this waiting period are law enforcement officers, active duty military and holders of valid CT pistol permits.

CT G.S. 29-28, 29-28a and 28-29 deal with who may obtain a pistol permit and the background check process required. To obtain a pistol permit, one must first take a State approved safety course. Then, the applicant submits responses to inquiries of arrest record (regardless of convictions), mental health, and criminal history and if they have ever been the subject of a protective or restraining order on a notarized form. The applicant is then fingerprinted and subject to a local background check during an eight week waiting period. From there, if approved, the applicant must then apply in person with the State at the State Police and is subject to additional background checks prior to approval. CT G.S. 29-28(b) gives an issuing organization the right to deny an applicant on the grounds of "suitability" as has been defined through several court cases. CT does not honor any other states pistol permits. CT G.S. 29-32 gives the issuing authority, which is both the State and the local police, the right to revoke a pistol permit under a litany of criminal circumstances or institutionalization. Only once the applicant has passed all these processes are they eligible to purchase a pistol or a long gun without a waiting period. The purchase is still recorded with the Department of Public Safety.

Person to person private sales of pistols need to be registered with the state and must be between two holders of pistol permits or they are ineligible for the transfer. The only loop hole that exists presently is that the person to person sale of long guns such as hunting rifles does not presently require registration, though it is recommended that all firearms be voluntarily registered. **I am in support of closing this registration loop hole.** CT. G.S. 29-37j does prohibit the second hand sale of any firearm to someone who is ineligible to possess such a firearm with penalties up to five years in prison. Transfers from out of state must be done through a holder of a Federal Firearms License and is subject to the same requirements as a retail transfer.

CT has a strict and explicit definition of assault weapons in CT G.S. 53-202. This bans a list of rifles such as the AK-47. If the shooter's mother legally purchased her AR-15 in CT and did not alter it in some way, it was not an "assault rifle" as defined by the General Statutes of this state.

I am in favor of strengthening CT. G.S. 52-571g which deals with the liability of persons who store firearms.

CT has some of the strongest gun laws in the country. Much of the legislation people are asking for in response to Sandy Hook is already on the books in this state.

Thank you,

-Ryan Knapp