

**J. Dewey Manufacturing Testimony to Gun Violence Prevention Working Group,
Bipartisan Task Force on Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety**

January 28th, 2013

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Kenneth Stauff, and I am an office manager for J. Dewey Manufacturing in Oxford, CT. My company manufactures high quality gun cleaning equipment for both the government and civilian sports men and women. I have a degree from the George Washington University in Washington D.C. in Criminal Justice and am also a former Law Enforcement Officer from George Washington University. I will not cite statistics that clearly demonstrate and will probably be debated here today; that guns save far more lives than they take, and that the overwhelming majority of legal firearm owners commit no crimes and are the most law-abiding citizens in the state. We all know this to be true; however, some lawmakers refuse to accept it, because it is contrary to their personal and political agendas.

I would like to point out another aspect: Business. Connecticut is home to many great firearms and shooting sports manufacturers. The National Shooting Sports Foundation, and firearm manufacturers such as Colt, Sturm Ruger, O.F. Mossberg, Charter Arms, Nutmeg Sporting Cartridge, and many others call this once great state home. Then there are the companies such as J. Dewey, which make cleaning equipment, Okay Industries, which makes standard capacity magazines for the Modern Sporting Rifle – the AR-15, Component Engineers – who make gas tubes for the AR-15 pattern rifle, Petron Automation which makes many small parts for the AR as well. We continue on to Connecticut Spring and Stamping, Sperry Automatics, Cole Screw Machine, Curtis Machine Products; these companies are among many others that make parts in a supporting role of the other manufacturers. Thousands of jobs and tens of thousands of dollars a

year in tax revenue will be lost should these draconian measures pass, including magazine limits, feature bans, special taxes and insurance requirements. Such laws would do nothing but single out a single group of law-abiding citizens.

The stock value of companies such as Sturm Ruger and Smith and Wesson has already plummeted due to the threat of restrictions – how much further do you think it will fall with more draconian measures placed upon them. Cerebus Capital Management has decided to sell The Freedom Group – a powerhouse set of companies in the firearms industry - holding companies such as Remington, Marlin and others. The most likely buyer of the Freedom Group is Taurus International – a Brazilian manufacturing group. It would hardly be surprising if they decided to move all these great American companies overseas. State unemployment is stated to be around 8.6%, but actual unemployment will be higher, as the number does not include those who have stopped looking for work. At the very minimum, these laws will cause pay cuts, layoffs and lost revenue and thus lost state income. At the worst, these businesses will close or move out of the state. Either way, the State of Connecticut and her citizens lose. In Connecticut alone, there are over 8,000 jobs – both manufacturers and suppliers providing \$550 million dollars in taxable output. When these people lose their jobs, how do you expect them to reelect you and support any decisions in the future? Their job loss will trickle down to less food, less gas, less luxury items purchased – less taxes being paid – and more financial burden placed upon an already broke and fiscally irresponsible state. The loss of jobs and salary will guarantee that come Election Day; you will be standing in the unemployment line with them.

I'd like to relate a personal story. Last Monday night, I received a call from my sister, who lives in Bethlehem. Bethlehem has a resident state trooper on duty only a few days, and when he is not on, the State Police are responsible for responding. My sister saw a strange vehicle and strange

people lurking in her driveway. She is a young, single mother of two with no means to defend herself. In a panic, she called me, and I rushed to her side. She had also called the state police, who advised that they would try to send a car to the area at some point that evening. They never appeared at the house or even drove by. I understand the Police have many obligations and cannot always respond to every call in a timely manner as many of the departments in the state are short-staffed and overextended. I stayed for several hours, ensured every door and window was locked and comforted my five and three year old niece and nephew, as well as my sister. I stood guard for them with my AR-15 and my pistol. I will never let anything happen to them while I still breathe. This was not the first time that house had been scouted for burglary. Two years prior the house was burgled while we were away, and taken, among other things, was my social security card and passport, college savings bonds, cash and coin collections. The best the investigators could say was “we have no idea.”

As a former law enforcement officer I know that police have no obligation to protect us. In *Warren v. District of Columbia*, (444 A.2d. 1, D.C. Ct. of Ap. 1981), the District of Columbia Court of Appeals ruled that police have no duty to provide police services to individuals, even when a dispatcher promises help is on the way. This include defense. We as citizens must defend ourselves, and the current measures proposed by the state – magazine limitations, taxes that make ammunition only available to only the rich, classification of the most common rifle in America for use in sporting and self-defense to be illegal – would cost lives, in addition to jobs and lost revenue. Our state has major financial problems, issues on how to manage those with mental health problems, infrastructure issues and many more. We should be focused on real solutions to real problems – not criminalizing decent and law-abiding citizens who have harmed no one. Criminals will always find a means of depriving the innocent of life, liberty and the

pursuit of happiness – no law could ever guarantee our safety from them. We all fear evil men, but we must fear even more the government that would take away the right to defend our families and ourselves from the wrongdoings of others.

Thank you for your time.