



CCDL, Inc.
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Connecticut Citizens Defense League, Inc.

Co-chairs and Members of the Gun Violence Task Force:

My name is Virginia Benedetto, I live in Stratford, and I am a software developer. I am a gun owner and sport shooter, and I am a founding member and Technology Coordinator of the largest grassroots pro-2A organization in the state of Connecticut, the Connecticut Citizens Defense League. I thank you for scheduling a public hearing to listen to us on this important subject.

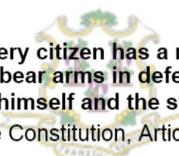
There are many buzzwords related to gun control, but unfortunately there is even more misinformation. Please, before any legislation is considered, educate yourself in the terminology. What is a semiautomatic? What is a high capacity magazine? What is an assault weapon? For legal and responsible gun owners, these terms mean something completely different than for those that are not familiar with weapons, and only know what they see and hear most often.

Semiautomatic: "Ejecting a shell and loading the next round of ammunition automatically, but requiring a squeeze of the trigger for each shot." (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/semiautomatic>) Each shot requires a trigger pull. Unlike an "automatic" weapon, which are highly regulated by Federal regulations, there is no spray, or continuous fire, regardless of ammunition caliber, magazine capacity, additional features, or firearm type (handgun, rifle, or shotgun).

Assault Weapon: "In discussions about gun laws and gun politics in the United States, an assault weapon is most commonly defined as a semi-automatic firearm possessing certain features similar to those of military firearms." "The term "assault weapon" is sometimes conflated with the term "assault rifle". An assault rifle is a military rifle capable of selective fire." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assault_weapon).

Most often, handguns, rifles, and shotguns are ONLY classified as an assault weapon due to cosmetic features of the gun, meaning they have NO affect on the functionality of the weapon. Adding a telescoping stock to a rifle does not make it fire faster, or make it automatic, it simply changes the way it looks, and can make a more customized fit for the user.

High Capacity Magazine: This is a hard term to define, as all weapons are different. There are many handguns that come standard from the manufacturer with more capacity than 10 rounds that seems to have become the magic number for distinguishing acceptable magazines from "high capacity" magazines. The difference in what is standard is usually determined by the stopping power of the caliber. In fact, many weapons that Police Officers use hold more than 10 rounds, up to 20 for stand issue handguns. There is no standard for all guns. Some guns even have a 'tube fed' magazine, which is not detachable. Some rifles can even hold 20 rounds in a tube magazine. A law cannot be imposed that would make criminals of hundreds of thousands of gun owners in our state, and **our state cannot afford to buy these magazines or guns from those that have legally purchased such devices in the event they were banned.** There is conflicting research on whether restricting the number of rounds in a magazine actually reduces the number of violent crimes committed with a weapon.



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to bear arms in defense
of himself and the state.



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Knowing these definitions, I would like to propose that our Law enforcement work to enforce those laws already on the books instead of passing new restrictions that affect those of us already following the laws. With Connecticut having the 5th strictest gun laws in the nation, we already have numerous laws to prevent gun violence, yet everyday just a few streets from my home, in the streets of Bridgeport, I hear about gun violence committed with what is probably illegally obtained weapons. There is never any mention or research that I know of about how a perpetrator obtained their weapon, so I cannot quote any statistics to verify my statement. What happens when the criminals come to my neighborhood, with their illegal weapons that may be better than my legal ones because I follow the law?

If legislation must be passed to help prevent gun violence, I will list a few bills that represent what I believe to be "common sense" gun violence prevention.

HB-5165 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON'S HOME, MOTOR VEHICLE OR BUSINESS: This bill is intended to clarify an individual's right to "stand their ground" and defend themselves from an attacker, in their home, business, or automobile.

HB-5269 AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR CRIMINAL USE OF A FIREARM OR ELECTRONIC DEFENSE WEAPON: This bill increases the penalty from a Class D Felony to a Class C Felony for use of a firearm or Taser-type weapon during the commission of a crime.

HB-5952 AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR THE UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM: This bill increases the penalty from a Class D Felony to a Class C Felony for illegally possessing a firearm.

AN ACT ALLOWING SCHOOL BOARDS TO ESTABLISH PROTOCOLS PERMITTING SCHOOL PERSONNEL OR STAFF TO POSSESS WEAPONS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS (Bill number unassigned yet): This bill clarifies that existing law permits school officials to establish protocols permitting school personnel or staff to possess weapons on school grounds.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information.

Respectfully submitted,

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Connecticut State Constitution, Article First, Section 15