



TOWN OF STONINGTON
Department of Police Services

J. DARREN STEWART, *Chief of Police*

January 30, 2012

State Representative Diana Urban
43 Assembly District
Legislative Office Building, Room 4057
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Diana:

I would like to thank Senator Andy Maynard, Stonington's Superintendent of Schools Leanne Masterjoseph, and you for coming to the Stonington Police Department last week to discuss a situation that occurred in Stonington just before Christmas. As we discussed, the incident involved a police officer(s) responding to school grounds for subjects possibly armed with firearms or paintball guns. The first responding officer arrived to observe several subjects and one in possession of what appeared to be a real handgun (later determined to be a realistic looking pellet gun) pointed at another subject. The police officer was confronted with a very serious situation where deadly physical force under State Statute could have been warranted, which would have been truly a tragedy for everyone involved. Luckily, the situation was resolved.

As we discussed, I believe it is worth examining legislation which would address the altering of these toys/pellet guns where the orange markings that delineate it is not real have been altered or removed. Also, the possession of these items within 1500 feet of a school should also be examined because of their realistic appearance.

The incident just before Christmas is just one of many incidents that police have had with these realistic looking toy/pellet guns around the country. Recently, police in Brownsville, Texas shot and killed a student in possession of a realistic looking pellet gun in a school and in Stonington we have had a number of calls about kids in possession of these. It is my hope that legislation can be enacted to make the altering of these to make them look more realistic (police cannot tell them apart from a real gun) by removing the orange tips or grips against the law in Connecticut and that possession of these items near school grounds can also be a crime.

If you are in need of more information or need us to come to Hartford, please let me know. I certainly appreciate Senator Maynard's and your support and concern on this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chief J. Darren Stewart". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Chief J. Darren Stewart

JDS/nrm

CC Senator Andrew Maynard
Superintendent Leanne Masterjoseph
Board of Police Commissioners
Chief Anthony Salvatore, CPCA Legislative Committee