

Press Release

Connecticut Carry Response to Governor's Domestic Violence Bill

A bill with no research and even less common sense

Hartford, CT, March 14, 2015:

On March 11th, the Connecticut Judiciary Committee held a Public Hearing to discuss several bills in front of a standing room only hearing room that will impact our individual rights in Connecticut.

Senate Bill 650 – A bill seeking to remove due process from the restraining order process

House Bill 6848 - A bill seeking to remove due process from the restraining order process

House Bill 6962 – A government overreach seeking to criminalize gun owners for keeping their firearms accessible when in their homes.

These bills were widely and universally rejected by the advocates for individual rights that appeared at the hearing, including Connecticut Carry. More instructive in this hearing, though were the arguments from the proponents. At the end of the day, when the two sides had battled things out in front of the legislature, the proponents of the anti-rights bills were left with a singular refrain: "there is a lack of education about the risk warrant statute". Interestingly, Connecticut Carry has been the sole organization to spend time and money to educate members of the public, state government and law enforcement about the Risk Warrant statute ([CGS 29-38c](#)) in Connecticut, which has been law for 15 years and has been discussed at length in both the media and in cases all over the state.

One of the things that struck the leadership of Connecticut Carry was the stunning display of ignorance of the Connecticut General Statutes by not only the Lt. Gov, her counsel and many members of the Judiciary Committee, but also the 'Domestic Violence Advocates' that were advocating for these anti-rights measures. We heard Representative Jeffrey Berger ask if permits can be issued to people subject to Restraining Orders, which is one of the most basic questions on the [pistol permit application](#) and is a disqualifier by statute ([CGS 29-28\(b\)](#)). The Governor's General Counsel could not answer this either. We also watched in amazement as Attorney Buffkin, General Counsel for the Governor's office, stated that she did not know why the current statutes involved Restraining Orders require a hearing within 14 days, a provision clearly entered into the statute to satisfy the requirement of due process.

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Connecticut Carry is dedicated to advancing and protecting the fundamental civil rights of the men and women of Connecticut to keep and bear arms for defense of themselves and the state as guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Constitution of Connecticut.

Lt. Governor Wyman and her counsel stood fast, in the face of repeated questioning, by the idea that a 'transfer' to an FFL or the police would somehow only transfer possession and not ownership. This is false. They do not even understand the basics of the word that they use: 'transfer'. When a person transfers a firearm to an FFL, they transfer **ownership**. And it also means that if the property in question is defined under the CGS as a 'Large Capacity Magazine' or 'Assault Weapon', it cannot be transferred back. **Ever**. The same administration that rammed through the 2013 Gun Ban is now advocating for a way to confiscate those firearms from people on a single person's accusation with no legal method to get those firearms back.

With the ignorance on display in the hearing from the proponents of these bills, it should be no surprise that you could drive a large truck through the holes in their understandings of how firearms laws work in Connecticut. For instance, what do they plan to do against a domestic abuser who has unregistered firearms? There is no requirement in Connecticut for firearms to be registered, only new firearms bought in this state are subject to this provision. And the state database is horribly flawed and contains many, many errors. The bills rely on the honor system from people who abuse their domestic partners and the proponents believe might be homicidal.

This is the illusion of safety, not safety.

The truly sad part is that the facts do not matter to the proponents of these bills. Representative William Tong said at one point in reference to the overwhelming opposition he saw at the hearing "this does not have to be intellectually coherent". Well, yes, it does. We demand that. Legislation should not be based on emotional rhetoric Representative Tong.

"I would like to express my surprise and shock that Nancy Wyman, the Lt. Governor and her General Counsel Attorney Karen Buffkin would appear before the Judiciary Committee to testify in support of proposed firearms legislation that they know nothing about. My concern extends to the lack of knowledge shown by members of the Judiciary Committee who clearly have NO working knowledge of existing laws, regulations, policies and practices regarding firearms" - Connecticut Carry Director of Legal Affairs Edward Peruta

"It is disappointing and downright pathetic that people are advocating against the basic tenets of law like due process and our individual rights. But it is absolutely despicable that they do so in the name of cases that would not have been helped by anything that they are proposing. Shame on the proponents of these bills and anyone who would further these bills." - Connecticut Carry President Richard Burgess

"It was a pleasure representing the law abiding firearm owners of Connecticut by my appearance in front of the Connecticut Judiciary Committee on March 11, 2015. Hopefully my testimony and answers to questions posed by members of the committee, will provide a better working knowledge of firearm issues on which the committee members may base any future firearm related decisions." - Attorney Rachel M. Baird