Public Safety and Security Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7052
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING LARGE CAPACITY MAGAZINES AND THE SALE OF AMMUNITION.
Vote Date: 3/18/2025
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 2/27/2025
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Public Safety and Security Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The proposed legislation seeks to expand the allowable maximum size of a magazine from ten to fifteen rounds. This bill increases the maximum allowable size of a magazine to increase the odds that an individual is able to amply defend themselves from a potential assailant. There are conditions, like when an individual is faced with multiple attackers, where a magazine that is capped at ten rounds presents significant impediments to an individual's ability to defend themselves. Therefore, an increase in the limit is meant to promote public safety and responsible self-defense.

The bill allows certain qualifying individuals to transfer large capacity magazines between each other. For these qualifying individuals, eliminating this restriction gives them greater freedom as to how they handle their firearm. This bill also permits shooting ranges to sell ammunition on site, instead of requiring individuals to bring their own. This has the potential to be economically beneficial to the ranges themselves and the larger economy as a whole.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Ronnell Higgins, Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection (DESPP), Opposes:
Commissioner Higgins is testifying on behalf of DESPP in opposition to the proposed legislation. DESPP notes that if this legislation passes, additional staff will be required to properly record each ownership record. The funding for the aforementioned staff is not included in the Governor's budget. Furthermore, DESPP has concerns about the provision in the bill which permits individuals to buy ammunition at shooting ranges. Currently, there is no

way to validate if an individual is a legal gunowner at these ranges - this allows for the likelihood that these ranges will sell ammunition illegally to individuals without a valid gun permit.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Justin Ceneviva, Supports:
Justin Cenevivia is testifying in support of the proposed legislation noting the constitutional concerns with restricting magazine size. He points to the Supreme Court Case District of Columbia v. Heller (2008) which upholds the constitutionality of possessing firearms "in common use" – in his view, magazines that hold more than ten rounds fall into this category. Moreover, he questions the utility of the magazine limit, noting that a reduction in gun related incidents was not positively correlated with this limit. He advocates that this bill should go further by completely eliminating restrictions on the size of magazines.

William DeNio, Retired Chief Master Sergeant, Supports:
William DeNio is testifying in support of the proposed legislation, but argues that Connecticut should go further. He worries about the risk of accidentally violating a firearm law, arguing these laws are unreasonably burdensome. While he notes part of the obligation of being a responsible firearm owner is to be aware of these laws, he contends that he, and many other firearms owners, are not lawyers; therefore, in a state like Connecticut which has many firearm laws, it is difficult to be aware of each one. He advocates for Connecticut to relook at all firearms laws to simplify them, and incentivize proper training and safety.

Tom Maloney, Research Coordinator, Connecticut Citizens Defense League (CCDL), Supports:
To emphasize his support for the proposed legislation, Tom Maloney presents statistics to support the notion that possessing guns for self defense is important. He notes that thirty-one percent of gun owners have been forced to use a gun in self-defense – this equates to 1.67 million cases of self defense per year. He advocates that a magazine limit greater than ten is necessary since human error may cause an individual defending themselves to miss frequently. Furthermore, he notes the prevalence of crimes that involve more than one attacker, which he lists as further reason to increase the capacity limit of magazines.

Jace Paul, Registered Nurse, Supports:
Jace Paul offers a unique perspective to explain their support for the proposed legislation. Despite identifying herself as a "progressive voter" who supports provisions like background checks, and general firearm safety, she notes her advocacy for Second Amendment rights. As a healthcare worker Paul is five times more likely to be a victim of workplace related violence, therefore, the peace of mind that self-defense affords is a great benefit. Paul supports responsible gun owners having the right to larger magazines to reduce their risk of harm.

Various Members of the Public I:
Nine hundred fifty-eight individuals testified in support of this bill advocating that legal gun owners should have the right to own a gun with a larger magazine, up to fifteen rounds, and that the current restriction of ten rounds is arbitrary. They argue that limiting the capacity of magazines is only to the detriment of law abiding gun owners since criminals will ignore these restrictions, thus creating an imbalance. These testifiers question the efficacy of the ban in

the first place, noting that these laws are rarely enforced in a significant way. Furthermore, many testifiers assert that bans on magazines are not rooted in historical precedent and conflict with *New York Rifle and Pistol Assoc. v. Bruen* as decided by the Supreme Court. Some testifiers note that there should be no restrictions on magazine capacity since they believe these provisions violate the second amendment. Ultimately, these testifiers tend to agree that magazine limits are not the solution to make gun ownership safer.

Various Members of the Public II:
Thirty-Three individuals are testifying in support of the proposed legislation arguing it promotes responsible gun ownership. Larger magazines augment safety by allowing individuals to practice skills at the range more fluidly without having to handle ammunition nearly as much. Furthermore, this bill promotes economic growth, specifically for gun ranges, by allowing them to sell ammunition directly; this can create jobs and grow these businesses. Overall, this bill would align Connecticut with national trends, and have positive benefits in the process.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Elizabeth Feltovic, Opposes:
Elizabeth Feltovic notes the inadequate mental health treatment in Connecticut, advocating until this is under control "we should not enable further access to ammunition." To emphasize the consequences of increased ammunition access, she notes that the assailant in the Columbine tragedy had purchased guns and ammunition legally via a gun show.

Mary Lee Kiernan, President & CEO, YWCA Greenwich, Opposes:
Mary Lee Kiernan is testifying in opposition to the proposed legislation on behalf of YWCA Greenwich. YWCA Greenwich is anxious about the potential consequences for public safety the passage of this legislation could have. YWCA emphasizes that greater access to firearms puts victims and survivors of domestic violence at a greater risk. Also, in the event of a tragedy, like Sandy Hook, having a limit on magazine size increases the chance that bystanders are able to intervene and prevent a greater tragedy. YWCA considers the passage of this bill a regression against the goal of creating safer communities.

Jonathan Perole, Opposes:
Jonathan Perole is testifying in opposition to the proposed legislation noting that Connecticut's gun laws are increasingly necessary against the backdrop of the current administration in Washington. Perole notes that state regulations have consistently been the first lines of defense to keep firearms out of the hands of those who should not possess them. Perole also emphasizes the widespread support in favor of the types of laws Connecticut has and their efficacy, noting that Connecticut "has the sixth lowest rate of gun deaths in the nation"

Various Members of the Public, Opposes:
Several individuals, enumerated below, testified in opposition to the proposed legislation. Many mentioned the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School to emphasize the havoc (LCMs) can wreak. Some of these testifiers argue that firearms with large capacity magazines (LCM) should only be in the hands of law enforcement, and civilians who possess

LCMs should surrender them. They note that LCMs have the capacity to cause more injury and death when in the wrong hands, so making them illegal for civilians would subsequently reduce casualties in gun related incidents. They argue that states without these types of restrictions have mass shootings with higher fatalities.

I. Laura Ambrogio
II. MaryLynne Boisvert
III. Karen Bobowick
IV. Louise Cronin
V. Katie Digianantonio
VI. Karen Edwards, M.D. MPH
VII. Lawrence Edwards
VIII. Sherie Gage
IX. Regina Griffin
X. Rhonda Heisler, CT Against Gun Violence
XI. Louise Hoffman
XII. Martin Isaac, Board Chair, CT Against Gun Violence, Education Foundation
XIII. Emily Kaliney
XIV. Ruth Lerro, CT Against Gun Violence
XV. Mary Ellen Masciale
XVI. Claire Matthews
XVII. Stacey Mayer, Director of Advocacy, Policy & Outreach, CT Against Gun Violence
XVIII. Linda McConville
XIX. Sister Maryann Mueller
XX. Barbara Patrick, Board Member, CT Against Gun Violence
XXI. Irene Skrybailo
XXII. Ben Soreff
XXIII. Catherine Weaver
XXIV. Andrea Webster

Reported by: Derrick Arnold **Date: 3/31/25**