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2022 MARCH 28TH PUBLIC HEARING GUIDE

Introduction

This is your complete guide to the Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee Public Hearing on Monday, March 28th at 11:00 A.M. The public hearing can be viewed via [YouTube Live](#) and may be broadcast live on [CT-N.com](#).

Two ways to advocate for your rights at the public hearing.

- 1) Email written testimony by 8 am, Monday, March 28, 2022 (earlier is better).
- 2) Sign up in advance to [testify virtually](#) via Zoom or telephone.

You do not need to be an expert to advocate for your rights.

A short simple email or testimony is fine.

If not you, then who? If not now, then when?

If you still have questions? CCDL is here to assist you.

Contact CCDL's Legislative Coordinator Ray Bevis at legislative@ccd.us or (860) 800-CCDL



TAKE ACTION NOW! Step by step to protect your rights!

- STEP 1** Prepare your written testimony (preferably in Word or PDF format)
- STEP 2** Email your written testimony to: PHtestimony@cga.ct.gov
- STEP 3** cc: your testimony to *your state* Senator and Representative. [Find your Legislator](#)
- STEP 4** Register to [testify via zoom](#) or telephone, before **Sunday, March 27th 3:00 P.M.**



STEP 1: How to prepare written testimony

- Keep it short, to the point and polite. Try to limit your testimony to one page
- Be clear whether you oppose or support the bills
- Give personal reasons why these bills are important to you
- Point out the effects these bills will have on you or groups of people
- Any testimony is better than none. Do not worry about the format

STEP 2: How to email your written testimony

- Email written testimony (preferably as a Word or PDF attachment) to the Public Health Committee at: PHtestimony@cga.ct.gov
- Try to email your testimony before the hearing, if possible

STEP 3: How to send a copy of your testimony to your legislator

- To find your State Legislator's email address:
 - Go to [Find your Legislator](http://www.cga.ct.gov) at www.cga.ct.gov
 - Select your Town, Street, and enter your house number
 - Select 'Find'
 - Click on their title to email them
 - Let your legislator know you're a constituent that submitted testimony and if you signed up to speak at the public hearing

The screenshot shows the 'Find Your Legislators' page on the Connecticut General Assembly website. The page has a blue header with the state seal and navigation links. Below the header is a search bar and a table of legislators. The table has four columns: Name (Web), Title (Contact), Party, and Bills. Two red arrows point to the 'Title (Contact)' column for Gale L. Mastrofrancesco and Rob Sampson.

Name (Web) ↕	Title (Contact)	Party ↕	Bills ↕
Gale L. Mastrofrancesco	State Representative, District 080	Republican	36 Bills
Rob Sampson	State Senator, District S16	Republican	146 Bills
[Blurred]	[Blurred]	[Blurred]	[Blurred]
[Blurred]	[Blurred]	[Blurred]	[Blurred]
[Blurred]	[Blurred]	[Blurred]	[Blurred]

STEP 4: How to testify in-person via Zoom or telephone

How to testify via Zoom

- To testify via Zoom **MUST register in advance** using the [On-line Testimony Registration Form](#)
- Registration will close on Sunday, March 27, 2022, at 3:00 PM
- If you're unsure if you will be available to attend, register anyway, you can cancel later
- After you register you will receive a pending approval email
- Before the hearing you will receive an email with the Zoom login link
- Speaking order will be posted on the [Public Health Committee website](#) on Sunday, March 25, 2022 at 6:00 PM
- Be sure to login into Zoom about 10-12 speakers ahead of you, some may not be present and will get passed moving you up
- Just before you it is your turn to speak you will get an invite on the Zoom screen to become a presenter-Accept the invite. This will allow you to speak for your testimony.
- Make sure to mute yourself until you are called
- When you are called, unmute yourself, turn on your camera and begin your testimony
- Introduce yourself clearly and the town in which you reside
- Be clear on your position and what bills you are testifying on
- You will have three minutes to speak
- When finished wait a moment to see if any legislators have questions

How to testify via telephone

- To testify by telephone, call the Phone Registrant Line at (860) 240-0560 leave your contact information and what bills you wish to speak on
- If registered to testify via telephone you will receive a call prior to when it's your turn to testify
- When it is your turn to speak begin your testimony
- Introduce yourself clearly and the town in which you reside
- Be clear on your position and what bills you are testifying on
- You will have three minutes to speak
- When finished wait a moment to see if any legislators have questions

TIPS for testifying virtually

- First time testifying? Have NO fear, it is your right, and you will not be the only first timer
- CCDL is here for you. If you have any questions [email](mailto:legislative@ccd.us) CCDL at legislative@ccd.us
- Make sure you pre-registered in advance, prior to Sunday, March 27th 3:00pm
- State your name and town for the record
- Be clear on your position and what bills you are testifying on
- Testimony is recorded and part of the public record
- Make it personal, tell your story and why this important to you
- If asked a question be polite and direct
- If you don't know the answer, offer to research and get back to them



- Increase your bandwidth - limit the number of devices connected to the internet
- Prepare materials in advance- print out what you want to say

Preparing your testimony – S.B. 477 & H.B. 5397

S.B. No. 477 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLIC HEALTH OF RESIDENTS OF THE STATE.

Statement of Purpose:

To address the public health needs of residents of the state.

Main points of the bill:

This bill will establish a 21-member Commission on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention to coordinate the funding and implementation of programs and strategies to reduce community gun violence in the state. By awarding grants and guidance to organizations working toward reducing gun violence and allow the commission to accept any gift, donation, or bequest for the purpose of performing their duties.

Who will the members of this Commission? Members of organizations that have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars lobby for gun control here in Connecticut. Representatives from organizations like CT Against Gun Violence, Mothers United Against Gun Violence

H.B. No. 5397 AN ACT DECLARING GUN VIOLENCE A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND ADVISORY COUNCIL ON GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

Statement of Purpose:

To declare gun violence a public health crisis and establish an Office of Gun Violence Prevention and Advisory Council on Gun Violence Prevention and Intervention.

Main points of the bill:

To Establish The Office of Gun Violence Prevention to maintain a research repository for data, research and statistical information regarding gun violence in the state. As part of maintaining such data/research.

- Creates an advisory council for The Office of Gun Violence Prevention
- Department of Public Health shall establish a violence data dashboard



CONNECTICUT CITIZENS DEFENSE LEAGUE

- Appropriate \$5 million from the general fund to The Office of Gun Violence Prevention for administration and grants to community organizations

The Office of Gun Violence functions:

- Assist researchers seeking information about gun violence prevention in the state
- Collaborate with researchers to identify gaps in available data needed for gun violence prevention research and develop strategies to improve relevant data collection in the state,
- Use any available research to enhance evidence-based gun violence prevention tools and resources available to communities in the state
- Improve the understanding of the disproportionate barriers to safety from gun violence by encouraging disaggregation of data by race and ethnicity when such research is conducted
- Promote relevant research regarding gun violence prevention and, where possible, make such research accessible to the state's research community and members of the public
- Provide technical assistance to all recipients of a grant award pursuant to subsection (d) of this section

The advisory council members:

At least one member from each of the following categories and appointed by the director of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention.

- Individuals impacted by gun violence
- Organizations with expertise in gun violence prevention
- Law enforcement
- Communities of color impacted by gun violence
- Researchers of gun violence
- Public health experts

Violence Data Dashboard:

The Department of Public Health shall establish a violence data dashboard, in collaboration with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, local law enforcement agencies and hospitals in the state, to collect and disclose data on the scope of, frequency of and locations and populations affected by violence, including, but not limited to, data on the number of victims of gun violence, rates at which and locations where gun violence occurs in the state and any contributory factors to such violence. The dashboard shall also include data on suicides with a gun.

What claims are being made from proponents of H.B. No. 5397

- Gun violence is an urgent public health crisis that demands the state invest more to save lives. Last year gun homicides were the highest in 25 years, nearly double the level in 2018.
- There is an urgent need to act, someone in CT is murdered with a gun once every three days.
- Strong gun laws and law enforcement are necessary but not sufficient break cycles of gun violence.
- People must feel safe in the communities where they live.



CONNECTICUT CITIZENS DEFENSE LEAGUE

- Black and Hispanic children are routinely exposed to gun violence. They witness shootings, hear gunshots, and know friends, relatives and family members who have been shot or killed.
- Exposure to gun violence during childhood can change a child's brain development and has harmful effects.
- Childhood experiences of gun violence are linked to lifelong consequences- chronic health problems, mental illness, substance abuse, increased likelihood of criminal behavior, forming healthy relationships and having stable employment.
- Connecticut has the sixth lowest rate of gun deaths in the nation, we still have an unacceptably high level of gun violence.
- Gun violence has a tremendous economic cost. That cost Connecticut taxpayers \$90 million per year. With an estimated tangible cost of \$430 million annually, and the societal cost brings the total to \$1.2 billion each year.
- Project Longevity has led to reduced gun violence rates where the program operates.
- A 2015 Yale study concluded that the program was associated with a monthly reduction of five group-member involved shootings and homicides. Around the nation, other program models, such as hospital-based violence intervention and violence interrupters, have proven track records of reducing gun violence.
- Law enforcement has an important role in gun violence prevention through focused deterrence strategies and enforcement of our state's strong gun laws, Connecticut needs to invest in a comprehensive portfolio of solutions that goes beyond policing.
- Since 2018, states and cities around the country have already adopted similar programs to address community violence:
 - **Illinois** Gov. Pritzker signed an executive order declaring gun violence a public health crisis and committed \$250 million to "directly reduce and interrupt violence in our neighborhoods."
 - **Colorado** Gov. Polis signed a bill creating an Office of Gun Violence Prevention, tasked with gun violence prevention education, establishing a grant program to fund community-based prevention programs.
 - **California** Violence Intervention and Prevention Grant Program was established by the legislature to appropriate \$30 million to cities and community-based organizations with the purpose of reducing homicide, shootings and aggravated assault through evidence-based initiatives.
 - **Massachusetts** has the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative is a standing program to fund ongoing efforts that focus on reducing violence among high-risk youth.
 - **New Jersey** legislature established a Violence Intervention Program and had since awarded \$20 million in multi-year grant funding to nine hospital-based violence intervention programs.
 - **Virginia** General Assembly established the Virginia Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Fund to make grants to support evidence-informed gun violence intervention and prevention efforts.
 - **Maryland** legislature established the Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention Program with \$4 million of seed money.

