

House Republican Press Release

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COMPROMISE LOST, STOLEN GUN BILL CLEARS PANEL HURDLE



REPUBLICAN PROPONENTS BROKER SUCCESS

HARTFORD – A compromise to last year’s failed efforts to track missing weapons passed a key legislative hurdle today when a companion measure to fund a gun trafficking task force fashioned by Republicans was approved in bipartisan fashion

in the Judiciary Committee.

The committee approved funding of up to \$500,000 for the gun trafficking task force. Republicans said that was a key factor in getting their support for the missing weapons bill and through the committee.

Republicans on the panel worked with Democrats to broker the successful compromise. One bill lessens the penalty for failing to report a lost or stolen weapon within 72 hours that it goes missing to an infraction. It also increases the penalty to a felony for a second offense. Last year, the bill failed in the Democratic-controlled House in the last days of the session.

House Republican Leader Lawrence F. Cafero Jr. of Norwalk praised Judiciary members, particularly state Rep. Arthur O’Neill of Southbury, for working out a resolution of what turned out to be a contentious debate last year.

“This is a common sense solution to an issue that failed last year and I believe it addresses the concerns raised on both sides of how to account for lost or stolen guns,” said O’Neill. He said the real solution to getting guns off the street would be through solutions developed by the task force.

The matters now go to the Public Safety Committee where the debate over gun control will resume. Cafero said that he hopes that the debate will center on reasonable ways to deal with the often thorny gun control matters. “The vote in the Judiciary Committee shows that these ideas and public policy disputes can be dealt with in a bipartisan way,” he added.

The weapon bill levies a \$90 infraction fine for failing to report it for the first offense. Subsequent failures to account for lost or stolen weapons would be treated as felonies and handgun owners would be subject to losing their licenses. O’Neill said that was a key component in resolving the debate.