

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Greene: Prohibit Altering Realistic Toy Guns to Prevent Tragic Consequences



Hearing Set on Rep. Greene's Bill to Prohibit Tampering with 'Air Soft' Toy Weapons

Recent incidents involving youths carrying realistic toy guns that could have had tragic consequences prompted state Representative Len Greene to introduce a bill to prohibit the alteration of 'air soft' replica firearms that will be considered at a public hearing February 6th.

Air soft replica firearms are air pressure toys that shoot soft plastic pellets, many of which are almost identical to real weapons when their distinctive markings are removed or tampered with, Representative Greene said.

"The incidents involved youths carrying 'air soft' toy pistols that had been altered to make them appear almost indistinguishable from real weapons," Representative Greene, R-105th District, said today. "In two of the incidents, teenage boys who were carrying air soft pistols were approached by police officers who could have responded with deadly force if the youths had brandished the toy guns they were carrying in a threatening manner. Although both of the incidents were resolved without injury to either the young men or the police officers, they could just as easily have resulted in tragic consequences."

"The 'air soft' replica firearms used in both incidents originally had the pistol barrel tips painted red or orange to distinguish them from real weapons. In both cases, the colored tips had been removed, making the toy guns almost identical to real weapons," Representative Greene said. "Under my bill, anyone who tampers with or alters distinctive markings on a toy gun would be fined \$100. If the individuals who alter replica firearms are under 18 years of age, their parents or guardians would be fined \$100. It is a commonsense response to a problem that could result in a death or serious injury. "

The General Assembly's Public Safety and Security Committee will hold a public hearing on the bill (HB 6924) on Tuesday, February 6, 2007 at 11 a.m. in Room 2E at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, said Representative Greene, who serves on the committee.