

Jonathan A. Mazza
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Legislative Testimony before the Public Safety and Security Committee

Ladies and gentlemen:

My name is Jonathan Mazza, and I'm a resident of the town of Farmington. I find myself greatly troubled by the actions of the Connecticut General Assembly, as they pertain to the issue of gun violence. It's understandable that in the wake of the Sandy Hook Tragedy, legislators feel a seemingly immediate need to do something, anything, to prevent an event like this from happening again.

Herein lies the problem, specifically pertaining to Senate bills 505, 506, 897, 1071, 1076, and House bills 6162, 6251, and 6595. I have meticulously read the bills under discussion today, and the fact remains (perhaps overlooked by the individuals who put these proposals forward) that these bills possess not a single element which would have done anything to have stopped the massacre of innocent school children. Adam Lanza, in the commission of his crimes and acts of wanton violence, broke a number of state and federal laws, many with severe criminal penalties. Had these laws been in effect at the time, we would have several more criminal penalties which could be readily applied to this gunman's corpse, and not a thing would be different.

It's quite clear to all those who have read them that these bills will do nothing to prevent crime, least of all, violent crime. Instead, what they accomplish quite readily, and quite well, is turning a significant number of law abiding Connecticut citizens into felons, restricting the Constitutional rights and liberties of the people, and making it prohibitively expensive and needlessly complicated to acquire the tools needed to defend oneself and one's family. These bills are not the answer, and I urge you to vote against them.

Your main consideration when trying to pass *meaningful* gun legislation should be to ask yourself the following question: "Is there anything which could have actually had an impact beforehand?" In the days before the shooting, Adam Lanza attempted to legally purchase a firearm, and was denied. Why was there no follow-up? Why did no one attempt to contact him to inquire about his reasons for wanting to purchase a firearm? In this case, the background check system failed: not because it didn't prevent Adam Lanza from purchasing a weapon, because it did, but because it didn't act as a means to identify a potential threat. Strengthen the existing background check system currently in place. Institute follow-ups on purchasing denials – find out why an individual was prevented or prohibited from purchasing a weapon, and then take effective steps to identify if that individual subsequently poses a risk to the health and well-being of themselves or others. Don't restrict the rights of law-abiding citizens who need firearms to protect themselves and their families. Do something *meaningful*, because the impact of this current proposed legislation will be anything but.