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Members of the Connecticut legislature's Public Safety Committee,

My name is Brett Ostapowicz; I was born in Meriden and raised in Wallingford where I currently reside next to my elderly parents. I am the first responder to my wife of 27 years, whom I also depend on for my safety as do my parents. I am also custodian at a local high school.

I request that the committee members to oppose all proposed and new bills modifying our current firearm laws and to vote down the gun-control measures they contain. Making it more difficult or more expensive for law-abiding citizens to protect their families responsibly with firearms, as these bills would do, will do nothing to make us safer in our homes, on our streets, or in our schools. In fact, these measures would do the exact opposite. We've seen time and time again in recent decades that gun-control methods have not reduced crime and death rates, and in fact, that citizens are safer in states and municipalities that honor the right to carry and the right to self-defense. Expanded background checks, gun registration policies, ammunition capacity limits, or expanding the list of prohibited firearms would not have prevented the Newtown tragedy that has left schools like mine searching for answers. Unfortunately, these answers will not come easy, but trampling the right to bear arms guaranteed to us in the United States and Connecticut constitutions will only do more harm at the same time as it undermines our most basic liberties. Our time would be better spent making our schools more secure.

Thank you for your time.