

Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, State of Connecticut Legislature

I fear the consequence of law being made in a highly emotional atmosphere following a terrible tragedy. Unless rationality can prevail, serious infringements on the Second Amendment are about to be made, as inanimate objects are made scapegoats for the evil actions of madmen and criminals. Our problem is not one of any particular firearm or ammunition magazine in the hands of honest law abiding people, and disarming them will do nothing to keep weapons out of the hands of the cunning insane or the career criminal.

May I remind you that the Columbine school killings took place during the first so called "assault weapons" ban. And that a couple of years ago there was an epidemic in China of crazed individuals going into daycare centers and elementary schools armed with butcher knives and meat cleavers, wreaking violence on a scale comparable to Columbine and Sandy Hook. When I was a young man, one could buy a Korean War surplus M-1 carbine through the mail, delivered direct to your house, and drugs and gun violence were virtually unknown. Our problem is not the gun, but a culture of violence, popular entertainment that glorifies and sugar-coats violence, a decline in morality, the prevalence of young men growing up without fathers, the rise of the drug culture and the violent gangs that sell drugs and commit 74% of all gun murders.

I particularly fear, and resent, the possibility that legislation may be passed that would essentially treat me as a criminal suspect for possessing firearms or magazines that were legally purchased. To require me to register them, buy permits for them, pay taxes on them when none of these requirements were in force when I purchased them simply smacks of a heavy handed assault on the clear and simple language of the Second Amendment. I believe this sort of retroactive law is unconstitutional under the "ex post facto" clause of the Tenth Amendment.

There are realistic steps that can be taken to reduce societal violence that I think we should investigate. I support universal background checks for firearms sales, with the exception of immediate family members (closing the so-called "gun show loophole") providing this is done with the existing instant background check that does not result in a permanent governmental registration of firearms and firearms owners. Historically, a centralized registration of firearms has always been a prelude to confiscation. And there are high profile public figures who have advocated total confiscation of all privately owned firearms. Such a total confiscation was recently introduced in Australia, and while gun murders went down, violent assaults, armed robberies, assaults on the elderly and home invasions all went up. My other recommendations have to do with mental health issues, the role of psychiatric drugs in acts of violence by young people taking them and the role of violent video games in conditioning disturbed minds to commit acts of violence. I believe these topics are outside the focus of this committee, and I have written my Senator, Joe Crisco about these concerns.

I thank you for the opportunity to offer these points of consideration to the committee

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