Public Safety and Security Committee
Public Hearing
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Testimony Provided by:

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I've come to speak today to show my support for a few of the proposed bills, and hopefully to illuminate the actual impact, or lack there of, that most others would have.

One life lost, no matter the circumstance, is way too many. A lost life is always a tragedy. That's why we owe it to everyone today and tomorrow to address the circumstances of the crime with wise legislation that makes an *effective* impact.

I think there are many problems and a lack of good solutions that just better communication and understanding between people could solve. I believe this is one of those issues. If my information is correct, aren't we still waiting for the police report to be completed and released? Surely we can magnify the issue a little more to make sure our actions are appropriate... Numerous questions go unanswered and still some larger questions have yet to be asked.

These measures before us today likely wouldn't be here if a murderer didn't enter Sandy Hook in December. Doesn't it follow that our proposed bills should carry some meaningful weight in order to prevent the event which started this legislative process? But I see bills that aren't in full capacity to do so, proposals that never were, and many bills that are largely misguided likely in the haste to do *something*.

- Further communication between authorities at state and local levels? - Excellent
- Make sure gun shows are up to par in terms of background checks when selling? - That's great too
- Look back a little deeper for hospitalization when it comes to pistols? - Absolutely
- Allow peace officers to carry on school grounds? - I'm with you on that one

And then it stops. Why are the bills attempting to address a tool, a rifle that functions the same as a the majority of others, instead of addressing the real problem: a person. A person who made an awful decision. It's very bothersome that we have proposals here today that seem to indicate guns are the main aggressor but pass right over the fact that even if the shooter didn't possess firearms at the time, society would still be left with someone who wished to harm countless people. There will always be tools in society, but the abuser of such tools will always be the problem. I ask you: don't target the tools of the peaceful majority because of the actions of a crazed person.

If we look at the events, we see the shooter did attempt to buy a weapon and the system worked to an extent - he was denied. But why couldn't just a little more have been done - a simple phone call to his mother notifying her and reminding her of the duty to store firearms appropriately - something that the majority of gun owners do and are reminded to do when purchasing one. The shooter also stole the weapons from her. He didn't need to seek the legal route because it had already worked. Should a time come when the expansion of "assault weapon" passes, it's just another ticking second where the evil or insane stay that way, where they will acquire the means of destruction by hook or by crook. This legislation begs the question: if it prohibits legal ownership, than why would bad people care to obey it anyway? The shooter's actions were against the law in the first place.

It's painful to, but realize: the Sandy Hook event could've been done with a knife, an airplane, a bomb, arson, or a pistol with 28 1-round magazines. Where is the discussion on family upbringing? Where is the legislation recognizing that these shooters, from Columbine to Newtown, were on dangerous medications? Where's the bill that says since gun free zones are always the target, then we will do away with them? We trust these amazing teachers in shaping our children's minds. We should not commit them to a role of human shield when they desire to save lives. Can we not also trust them in bearing arms? The shooter was coward enough to kill himself with the arrival of the police. Doesn't it follow that if a teacher posed a threat, we could've at least changed the odds?

More people are murdered with screwdrivers, hammers, kitchen knives, bare hands than your definition of an assault weapon. Of course, most violence, gun crime occurs in gang/drug related incidents. What effect will these bills have on that environment? Nothing. All men are not angels. When someone like the Newtown shooter desires maximum destruction, please do not tell us that we cannot have maximum protection. When they want death to the Nth degree, don't tell us to what degree we may defend ourselves. When bad people disobey countless laws already, do not invade the freedoms of good law-abiding people. I implore you to not pass any new measures of gun control.

My name is Jacob Hemenway, I vote, I love freedom and will search for it in another state if I have to.

Many thanks. I appreciate your time and consideration,
Jacob Hemenway