

Hello. My name is Nina Johnsrud and I am from Ridgefield CT. I was number 146 on the list to testify before your committee, but after waiting approximately 12 hours in the overflow room or in the hearing room itself, I realized that it would be another 8 hours before my time would come, so I left.

Below is the testimony I would have given, but first I would like to comment on the process established by the committee to collect this testimony. If your goal in having a public hearing is to hear from both sides of the issue so that you can make a well-informed decision on the legislation, then you have failed. With all due respect, if you had set up two separate days for hearings – one for those in favor, and one for those opposed – then you could have gathered a great deal more information in a vastly shorter amount of time (your time and my time). Those opposed would not need to repeat themselves for hours on end, many of whom were there for the sole purpose of blocking (in essence a filibuster) the other point of view from having a chance to speak. And those in favor would not have been afraid to come to the Capitol, as many of us find many of the gun proponents to be fist-pounding, loud-mouthed bullies who seek to intimidate us, and we therefore stay home.

What I had hoped to say in person is as follows:

I am a mom who was horrified by the events at Sandy Hook. I spent the entirety of March 14, 2013 listening carefully to the people testifying before you, and I hope you realize that the array of people before you are most definitely not a cross-section of the people of Connecticut. 70% of Connecticut residents stand with me in wanting much stricter gun control laws. And while the gun proponents may be passionate about their cause, so are the moms and dads that I identify with.

So much of what I heard (repeatedly) at the hearing today had to do with one of the following:

1. More gun laws won't change anything, so therefore do not do anything new and different.
2. More gun laws means more hassle, more forms, more fees, time delays, etc. In other words, it will be a hassle
3. You're attempting to limit my freedom

Please let me address these one by one.

1. Regarding the argument that new laws won't change anything: First of all, I don't agree with that point of view and I genuinely believe that we CAN have an impact. Don't we owe it to the good citizens of Connecticut to try? It would be an insult to the people of Sandy Hook to fail to do something. In my opinion, we all owe Sandy Hook the biggest try we can possibly muster.
2. Regarding the argument that it's going to be a hassle: That's just plain silly, particularly when there's a chance that we could be saving lives. If we can make inroads into pistol deaths in inner cities by implementing straw purchaser penalties and through registration requirements, it is absurd to argue that we can't handle the hassle.
3. Regarding the argument that we are limiting their freedom: I heard someone say that the assault weapons ban would cause "suffering" to the gun owner. I point out that we are LIMITING their choice of weapons, not ELIMINATING their access to weapons. I ask you to

contrast the suffering of the gun owner to the suffering of a Sandy Hook mom who has lost a child. No contest.

I urge you to pass the absolute strongest legislation you possibly can, so that we don't end up with legislation that is purely cosmetic, or "feel good" legislation. 70% of the people of Connecticut support this, and I will work hard to see that you get re-elected for doing the right thing.

Thank you for your time and attention today.

P.S. Has anyone reached out to the many gun manufacturers in Connecticut regarding their Research and Development departments? Colt, Mossberg, Stag, Sterm Ruger, etc should all be working on an extraordinarily strong "weapon of the future" as an alternative to guns that will be so effective that people would want to switch to this for self-defense. This extraordinarily strong weapon (a) would spray out in a fan-like way (like buckshot) so that it's very easy to hit a moving target, and (b) would completely incapacitate the assailant for one full hour rather than killing the assailant, giving the police time to arrive.