

Testimony Submitted March 14th, 2013.

My name is Themis (Temi) Bova and I reside at 8 Mulberry Street, Ridgefield, Ct. 06877, with my husband, John, and my 5 year old daughter, Jennifer. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the public hearing on March 14th. Therefore, I am offering my written testimony below.

I support:

- **A Ban on military assault-style weapons,**
- **A Ban on high capacity ammunition magazines**
- **Universal background checks**
- **Universal and annual registration renewal**
- **Limiting handgun purchases to one a month**

I was at Scotland Elementary School (SES) in Ridgefield, waiting to pick up my daughter, when the school went into complete lockdown, the day of the Sandy Hook shooting.

I stood by, helpless, as I watched SES Principal Mark Solomon, step into action to maintain order and calm.

With your help, I, and many others, will never have to be in that situation again.

Please do the right thing.

It is not a matter of infringement when it comes to passing a ban on military style. Any citizen who desires a military style weapon has many options available to him, such as joining the National Guard--which is our nations' militia. Military style weapons have only one purpose and that it to kill many people as quickly as possible. It simply is not necessary for a citizen to own an assault style weapon, unless one's aim is to kill or murder many people, rapidly.

Our own law enforcement officers cannot serve and protect the public when they are out-armed.

My husband and I flew to Guatemala City, Guatemala in April 2008 to complete the adoption papers to bring our beautiful daughter, who is now 5, home to the United States. We hoped not only to create a family, but to offer this wonderful, innocent child a chance for a better life. As you are probably aware, Guatemala has only recently begun to recover from a civil war that lasted approximately 25 years.

When we were in Guatemala, our hotel, a Marriott in the best neighborhood of the city, was surrounded by a 30 foot high concrete and steel fence. We were instructed not to walk far from the hotel. All of the buildings in the neighborhood were gated, with the gates topped by razor wire, and guarded by security forces holding assault weapons and draped with many rounds of ammunition.

When we walked on the streets, we met with very few people. When we did cross paths with the few pedestrians we did see on the street, they averted their eyes, clearly afraid of any personal contact.

When we took our daughter to her pediatrician for her final check up before we left for the US on our first visit, we parked in the medical building's parking garage. We had to carry our 7 week old daughter by an armed guard--an armed guard very unlike a typical American security guard that one sees in public buildings in the US. This armed guard carried an automatic machine gun and had several rounds of bullets slung over his shoulder. This was a very common sight wherever we went in the city.

There was a McDonald's near the hotel. We never saw anyone walk in or out of the McDonald's; we only saw a delivery man on a motorcycle who delivered food orders to patrons because they are too afraid to walk on the street or enter the McDonald's for fear of violence.

Is this the kind of America you want for yourself and your constituents?

Yes, we believed we were offering this child, our child, a chance for a better life, given what we had just witnessed.

But given recent events and legislative inaction, we are not so sure.

Passing this legislation should not be about politics. Please do not let yourselves be persuaded that voting for the prevention of gun violence will halt economic development, or, infringe upon second amendment rights. You know that these arguments are disingenuous at best.

Passage of legislation to prevent gun violence is about doing the moral and right thing.

Please have the courage to do what my child and many other 5 year olds

have to have every day. Please do not feel you have to be apologetic when making the correct choice in your vote.

Please do the right thing and pass the ban on assault weapons and large capacity magazines. Please support mental health initiatives that will enable law enforcement and educators to identify potential threats to society.

We await your action, and we do vote.

Thank you,

Temi Bova

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