

March 14, 2013

Dear Senators and Representatives of the Gun Violence Working Group

My name is Steve Bartholomew. I am a product development manager for a defense contractor and a licensed professional engineer in Connecticut. More importantly, I am a father of 3 wonderful children, all of whom I have taught to shoot. Specifically, I've taught them to shoot safely and how to be a responsible firearm owner and user.

Thank you for having a public hearing on this complicated issue and not ramming legislation through like was done in New York. I hope you genuinely care about your constituents concerns and this hearing is not just for show. You have a difficult task. But please don't let the actions of one - affect hundreds of thousands.

I am very concerned with many of the anti firearms bills currently in process, especially SB 1076, and I fear for the future of my kids in Connecticut. The way this bill is written will turn thousands of law abiding citizens into felons. What options will I have - if suddenly the things that I have owned and used for 40 years are made illegal? I can't tell my kids it is OK to ignore the law even though it violates my constitutional rights. The only option will be to move out of state. Thousands of fellow citizens will be in the same predicament.

The combination of these bills, while perhaps not outright confiscating our firearms immediately - with do so over time, by making it very difficult or impossible to use the firearms, or to pass them down to our children or grandchildren. It will be "death by a thousand cuts" for our rights.

**Senate Bill 1076:**

I cannot believe that this bill was created in the United States of America.

The worst parts of it are **firearms registration, magazine bans, and "assault weapon" bans**. Just looking at the worst of the worst here - the magazine ban:

**The magazine ban:**

Loss of personal property!

Registration and confiscation!

Mandated destruction of personal property!

Turning otherwise law-abiding citizens into felons!

I cannot believe this is happening in Connecticut - "The Constitution State"!

Section 15 of Article 1 of the Connecticut Constitution:

"Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state."

SB 1076 effectively takes this right away. I don't see how this can be considered constitutional.

If these extreme measures pass I am committed to leaving Connecticut. Not just because my personal activity of competitive shooting has been affected. But because the freedoms that our founding fathers fully intended and encouraged - citizens arming themselves sufficiently in order to protect their family and neighbors from violent threats to person, property and freedom - have been degraded. But before I leave the state I will do everything I can to vote into power leaders who will overturn these draconian provisions.

Please focus on the actual measures that will reduce gun violence – such as increasing the enforcement of existing laws, increasing the penalty for criminal use of weapons, and keeping weapons from criminals and those who are mentally unstable. These solutions may be harder to devise and implement than just instituting a blanket ban. But as you assess these bills coming before you, please consider the negative impact the bans will have on the hundreds of thousands of responsible firearm owning, law abiding, citizens in your state.

I realize the lawmakers feel they must do something after the Newtown tragedy. I pray you can find enough members who will vote to pass legislation that does not dangerously disenfranchise a large part of your constituency.

Thank you.

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