

Testimony by Ted Carnevale at the March 14, 2013, public hearing of the Connecticut Public Safety and Security Committee.

The central premise of all these bills is that gun control laws prevent crime and violence. That notion, and these proposals, must be rejected. They're based on illogic, ignorance, half-truths, and outright lies that deny reason, our own experience, and the lessons of history.

Before the late 1960's, this country had very few gun control laws. Almost anyone could buy guns, almost anywhere, even by mail order, no questions asked, and no background checks. Many of those guns were semiautomatic pistols and rifles.

Kids in rural districts even took guns to school so they could go hunting on the way home. Yet there were no mass shootings in schools or movie theaters. No shootouts between rival drug gangs, no shooting of innocent bystanders, none of what happens every day now in Washington DC, Chicago, or the great state of California.

So what changed over the past 50 years?

Firearms *didn't* become more available. The massive expansion of gun control laws has made them *harder* to get than ever. There are now more than 20,000 local, state, and federal gun control laws, but criminals and mass-murdering lunatics still get their hands on guns. Even in Connecticut, which has some of the toughest laws in the nation.

So now we are told to ignore history, experience, and reason itself. We're supposed to ignore the failure of 20,000+ gun control laws, and believe that these new bills contain magic spells that will make us all safe.

But all these proposals have already been tried, and failed. Gun bans and magazine restrictions were part of the Clinton gun control law, but they didn't reduce crime or violence. Background checks have failed to prevent crime and violence, and "universal background check" is a joke--criminals and madmen just won't participate. And every universal background check bill is only a Trojan horse for a registry of who owns what. From there, it's a short step to confiscation--think California, Chicago, Canada, Australia, and Great Britain.

These bills would implement expensive, complicated licensing and registration schemes that will keep law-abiding citizens from having what they need for self-defense. Hardest hit will be women and children, the elderly and disabled, and especially the poor. Just like in DC and Chicago.

These bills would set up tricky rules and regulations designed to force honest citizens, who have done nothing wrong, to forfeit their guns under threat of confiscation and mandatory sentencing as felons.

These bills would impose violations of privacy and deny our civil right to defend our families and ourselves.

But they *will* not prevent crime or violence, and when they fail, there *will* be *new* demands for *more* restrictions of our civil rights.