Haggerty, Katie

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Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 8:09 AM
To: JudTestimony
Subject: Support SB 650, HB6848, HB6962

Testimony to CT General Assembly Judiciary Committee in support of: SB 650 An Act Concerning Temporary Restraining Orders; HB 6848 An Act Protecting Victims of Domestic Violence; HB 6962 An Act Concerning Firearm Safety

My name is Kathryn Mayer, and I live and vote in Newtown Connecticut.

Let me tell you a story, it's one you all know, but please, please listen to mine. My friend called panicked inside her locked car, sobbing hysterically. "I just can't take it anymore." I heard the yelling and banging as her boyfriend, drunk and violent, circled the vehicle, screaming and cursing, taunting her. I could hear it all through the phone. The fight escalated quickly, and I soon became an invisible eavesdropper to the mayhem, as he smashed the car with increased intensity and she screamed STOP IT! GET AWAY FROM ME!

"DRIVE!," I screamed into the phone. "Do you have keys??? Where are the kids? DRIVE! He has guns – where's his gun?? Just drive! Get out of there NOW!" And the phone went dead.

She drove, and called me back later, apologetic and embarrassed. I'm sorry I bothered you; he's not that bad. He'd never shoot me. He'd never hurt the kids. You know that.

But I don't.

So not surprising my response when Newtown schools went into lockdown that horrific day in December 2012. My daughter texted me huddled on the floor of her math class at Newtown High School.

"Mom, what's going on? We hear helicopters. Somebody got shot at Sandy Hook?"

This is how I responded:

"Don't worry, some crazy guy went into Sandy Hook and probably shot his wife. Let's hope he didn't kill his kid as well."

I wrote that. And I meant it.

This scenario, played out all too often in situations of domestic violence, was completely acceptable to me and probably to many of you as well. It is a story we have all heard before: the husband/the boyfriend kills the woman. Many different versions, but the ending too often the same.

You have the ability to change this.

You, distinguished elected leaders, have the opportunity to help change the predetermined outcome for too many victims of domestic violence. You not only have the ability and opportunity to institute life saving changes to our laws, but with all due respect, you have the responsibility.

I urge you to support the bills proposed that will no doubt protect more victims in dangerous, volatile situations. These bills have the potential to create alternative, safer outcomes that we, particularly women, can live with.

With gun ownership comes responsibility. Safe storage secures weapons with accountability. Too often pro-gun activists proclaim with a vengeance nothing in CT gun legislation would changed what happened at Sandy Hook, but we all know that is not the case. The removal of high capacity rounds, the inability to purchase military style assault weapons, background checks on all gun sales, and the safe, secure storage of weapons in the home would have made a drastic difference in the lives lost in Newtown.

I support the right to bear arms, and I whole-heartedly support the laws and bills that further promote accountability and responsibility to accompany that right.

I applaud your efforts to uphold legislation designed to protect the freedom of CT citizens to pursue the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. To protect all citizens.

Thank you for your due diligence and persistence in these efforts.

Kindly,

Kathryn Mayer

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