Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Rebimbas and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary:

In 2004, a man named Chris DiMeco was in the midst of a spree of petty crimes all committed to support a drug addiction than spanned over a decade. Up until that point, the extent of his crimes consisted primarily of auto theft and home break-ins. In November of that year, while robbing a home in Greenwich, CT, he opened the drawer of a nightstand to find an unsecured hand-gun. With access to a gun, his crimes escalated to armed robbery.

Less than a month later, he robbed a jewelry store in Long Island, shooting and killing the owner, a father of two. A month after that, he robbed a jewelry store in Fairfield, CT. The owner, Tim Donnelly, was shot 5 times. His wife, Kim Donnelly watched in fear before being shot 6 times. They were both killed.

My name is Tara Donnelly Gottlieb. I am their daughter.

Had that gun in Greenwich been secured, my parents might be here today. I used to think of their death as a random act of violence – a senseless outcome of a robbery gone wrong. But I no longer do. I think about what the common denominator is in the 98 gun violence deaths that occur daily in this country. The answer is access. Whether intentional or accidental, no act of gun violence can occur without access to gun. That notion is pretty obvious. Then why aren't the common-sense measures to limit that access also obvious?

As the mother of two, I think of all of the measures we take as parents to do everything we can to keep our children safe. We owe it to them to ensure the limiting access to firearms is included in these measures. Every day, I live with the outcome of a gun getting into the wrong hands.

If you've done nothing to prevent it, it's not random.

Please vote in favor of HB 7218

Tara Donnelly Gottlieb