

Thank You Members of the Judiciary Committee for allowing me to speak,

I am here in support of bills HB 7218, 7223, 7219, SB 60

My name is Alex Villamil and I am a resident of Sandy Hook, CT.

For many years I have avoided the gun violence issue for personal reasons. Due to the seemingly never ending deaths that we hear about in the news, occurring almost on a daily basis, I decided as of last year that I needed to step up and help out.

The reason for my reticence in dealing with the issue of gun violence was because of the death of my brother. Back in August of 1992 my brother was gunned down by a disgruntled employee. When the employee heard he was fired, he demanded his pay check on the spot and when my brother told him to come back for it that afternoon, his employee pulled out a revolver and shot him 5 times killing him on the spot. The memory of that time brings a flood of bad memories as you can imagine, for that reason I have avoided anything dealing with guns. I was very close to my brother and regardless of the passage of time it still remains an open wound that has never healed.

I want this committee to take in the depth and scope of gun violence. It not only affects the life taken, but it ravages the lives of those who's loved one was taken. Whenever the memory of what happened 27 years ago this coming August comes flooding back, it is like reliving the pain and the loss of my brother like it was only yesterday. It was a loss for a young wife who lost her husband, a loss for two young children who never got to know their father and for me who had a brother, a best friend and all of sudden didn't. A loss for not only what was but what could have been.

I personally hate guns. I've never owned one and don't think I ever will own one.

For those people who find the need to own guns, I believe that once they assume ownership of a weapon, they assume the responsibility for that weapon. A gun by its nature is lethal therefore it is important to make sure that that weapon does not fall in the hands of anyone not intended to use it or in turn handle it in a responsible fashion. The current legislation proposed, that requires gun owners to safely store a revolver can save lives. I think back on the Sandy Hook tragedy and subsequent tragedies. Had those weapons been kept away from unintended hands, many lives could have been saved.

By supporting this bill, this committee has it within their power to prevent more tragic loss of life. Not only loss of life but the collateral harm that the victim's loved ones have to endure. Safe storage of a revolver may be at most an inconvenience, but the public good that "inconvenience" imparts is immeasurable. I am here to honor the memory of my brother and I guess in a sense to make his loss have some meaning. His was a senseless death. I am also here for myself because the suffering and heartbreak that I and my family endured is a suffering that I think the passing of the bills in question can prevent other families from experiencing.

Please support bill numbers HB 7218, 7223, 7219, SB 60

Thank you for your time.