

On May 11, 2012, in the New Haven courthouse I became a US Citizen - I had lived in this country for 8 years and welcomed the opportunity to embrace this country more fully as a citizen for me, my husband and my children.

On December 14, 2012, I was shaken to the core, like everyone around the world, by the events that took place at Sandy Hook. How could I have chosen to live in a country with my children and have something like this happen?

I believe if we stand up and make changes, this country will be better and I applaud the state of Connecticut for putting together this bipartisan legislative committee to act on issues concerning school security, guns and mental health.

Regarding school security - I do not want more guns in my children's schools. I do not want armed guards greeting my children - examples in history have shown us that it just doesn't work to make our schools safer.

The horrific events at Columbine happened even though the high school had two armed guards - one assigned to the school and one who was nearby. Recently, on January 10 at Taft High School in California there was a full-time armed police officer assigned to the school. On the day of the shooting, he was not at the school because heavy snow prevented him from leaving his home.

And that's just it - there will be human issues that will arise - what if the armed guard had his/her break and that's the time a gun man comes into the school? - having more guns does not help to keep our schools safe.

I was saddened to hear about the shooting this week in Texas on the Lone star campus. However, not to diminish the pain and suffering of the 3 injured and in the hospital, I was glad that the numbers weren't higher - the weapon used was a handgun so thank goodness that

individual didn't have an assault rifle or we might have been listening to a much dire story.

I believe state wide security measures should be put in place - the video and buzz in systems, the lockdown drills in the schools and educating the teachers, administrators and support staff of what to do in an emergency but I am vehemently opposed to have any guns on school property - it doesn't help.

Since the shooting at Columbine in 1999, there have been 33 school shootings in the United States and 14 school shootings in the rest of the world combined. Other countries around the world have safer schools and don't have armed guards at the doorstep - what is different? They have stricter and safer gun laws - get the assault weapons and the high capacity ammunition magazines off the street and our schools will be safer.

Thank you

Dayna Pallant, Ridgefield CT