

Dear School Safety Task Force Members,

I am writing to you today as I am unable to attend your hearing on January 25th.

The tragedy at Sandy Hook could have been prevented... but not by banning guns or ammunition or by punishing innocent law abiding gun owners in CT with more restrictive legislation.

The Sandy Hook shooting could have been prevented by stronger school security measures.

First of all, the establishment of "Gun Free Zones" is meaningless to a criminal whether it's a school or other venue. Criminals disregard such a designation. Adam Lanza sure ignored it. Let's be real here... schools are also "Drug Free Zones" but that does NOT stop the flow of drugs within school property.

I propose that we eliminate "Gun Free Zones" and allow teachers and school administrators to conceal carry if they so desire, or even carry pepper spray on their person. A criminal with a gun can be quickly dealt with and probably stopped before a 911 call is answered and responded to. Just as we have fire extinguishers and other safety measures utilized in schools, teachers and administrators who are confident and comfortable with concealed carry can be a way to end a violent school act quickly. Just think how things may have been different if the principal of Sandy Hook had access to a self-defense weapon (including pepper spray) while Lanza was in her office screaming at her! She could have done much more than turn on the Public Address System from her office.

I have heard reports that Adam Lanza shot his way into the school - that he was not "buzzed in". So what would have prevented Adam Lanza from gaining entry to the school? Locked steel reinforced doors? Bullet proof glass? An armed guard at the door? Metal detectors? Maybe all of the above. There should be multiple ways to slow entry of a deranged murderer to a school building.

Of course we do not want to make schools into unfriendly fortresses, but there certainly should be much better security measures taken to protect our children from unwanted strangers, whether they enter the school armed or unarmed! We protect banks, federal buildings, jewelry stores, sporting events, factories, energy plants, synagogues and other places with armed guards; are our schools any less important?

Our children should be made safe, and every single school in this state should have a complete safety and security plan drawn up to identify and implement school security measures with an eye towards stopping unwanted intruders. These measures should allow for unobtrusive security. We have lots of technology and know-how and I believe this can be done quickly and easily, and much more effectively than just having a sign that reads "Gun Free Zone".

Every school administration should have a plan in place as to what faculty must do if any intruder enters the school... and it must include more than just a "lock-down" protocol. There must be provision for protection of children and self-defense. Perhaps teachers can have access to pepper spray or a panic button. The candy store that my daughter works in has a panic button that alerts the police immediately, why can that not be made available in school rooms?

Finally, we must end all of this silliness of punishing children who bring nerf guns to school or draw pictures of guns in school. It is horrendous to brainwash children to be afraid of guns and to not speak or write or draw pictures of guns. Instead we ought to be teaching gun safety and self protection to

children. When I was a child in school we had drills that instructed us where to go if there was an emergency, and even taught us to hide under our desk in cases of explosions... times are just as dangerous, and we ought to be instructing our children, in an age appropriate way and with consideration of contemporary threats, on how to react in emergency situations.

You MUST realize that currently anyone can get into a school, poison the food, place a bomb, or simply walk in and throw acid into the faces of children. Unfortunately people do terrible things and so we must secure our schools to prevent such heinous crimes from happening by the hands of deranged people.

Most importantly, I beg you all to please not enact legislation just for the sake of "doing something", but instead enact common sense solutions to the issues regarding securing our schools and keeping our children safe. Banning guns and punishing law abiding gun owners with harsh and punitive legislation would not have stopped Adam Lanza from his heinous act.

Thank you for your consideration,
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