

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of my husband and myself. We would like to take a moment to share our thoughts regarding gun violence and protecting children and schools. We strongly support any legislation that will prohibit the sale of rapid-fire weapons. While we believe in the right to possess a firearm if the carrier has been trained and is mentally competent, we do not believe the Constitution ever envisioned the right to bear the types of arms that have become commonplace. We strongly support training requirements and better screening for mental health, although we firmly believe that it will be easy to evade mental health screening as many mentally ill individuals will simply not seek treatment. For those who have raised the issue that it is not the weapon but the person behind the weapon that is the problem - they are most definitely mistaken. It is true that a sick person will envision and attempt to accomplish sick things, but a sick person could not commit the tragedy that occurred in Newtown were it not for a rapid-fire weapon. While some may have been harmed if Lanza had used a knife or a gun that fired only a few bullets, Lanza would have been incapable of committing the massacre that he did without a rapid-fire weapon. Yes, sick people will envision and do sick things. But sick people without rapid-fire weapons CANNOT accomplish what was done in Newtown. Finally, we strongly support having armed officers at all schools FOR ALL ACADEMICS LEVELS. While some may object to children growing up in a world that requires such protection, sadly that is where we are. Additionally, such officers do not need to be menacing, fear inspiring guards, but rather beloved officers who are there to protect our children. Officer Lynch at Beecher Road School is a perfect example. He is loved by students and parents and he is armed. We also are deeply puzzled by the fact that while our local elementary and high schools now have armed officers, our middle school does not. This is an anomaly that cannot be rationally explained and must be addressed immediately. Our son is presently attending Beecher Road School which thankfully is protected by Officer Lynch, however we are haunted by the fact that once he enters middle school there will be no such protection. We hope this is corrected expeditiously. For those who question where funding will come for officers at schools, one source should be the gun industry. Legislation should be passed which imposes a tax on the sale of all guns and ammunition regardless of type, which tax funds should be used to protect our children from the weapons sold by this very profitable industry. We impose a tax on the sale of cigarettes to protect the public. A similar tax should protect our children and our teachers from harm by gun violence.

Thank you for your thoughtful attention to this most pressing issue. My husband John Masucci joins in this testimony.

*M. Juliet Bonazzoli*

Cummings & Lockwood, LLC  
Six Landmark Square  
Stamford, CT 06901  
203-351-4288  
203-708-5611 (Right Fax)