

To the committee,

The tragedy at Newtown.... I can't even put into words how outraged I am over this incident. I also can not contain my outrage that our state allows these guns to be owned in the first place. Why does anyone need this type of gun other than to kill people? Why the big magazine clips? Armor piercing bullets, why is this allowed? How can we even try to keep our schools and citizens safe when this is allowed to be owned and by who knows. I've read that Adam Lanza's mother was a responsible gun owner. Really? 26 people are dead right now, 20 of them being children, so please tell me how that is responsible.

So, onto school safety. How do we keep our schools safe? Well, our town now has people show their ID and they have to sign in when entering the building. That's great, though Sandy Hook had a strict security system as well. How long do you think it took for the shooter to get past those glass doors using a Bushmaster? Two seconds, maybe three? How is checking people's IDs going to fight firepower like a Bushmaster? Why not be honest? If this happens again, we need a school that can buy time for its students before the police can get on the scene. The middle school in our town has glass doors for side entrances that may be locked, but how long before those could be blown out? A person could shoot those right out in seconds and be in the building before students had time to take cover. The front doors to most of the schools are glass just like Sandy Hook. So, two to three seconds to shoot them out? Is it then up to the administrators to throw themselves at the person? Demanding to see an ID? I'm not advocating making these schools into prisons but they have to be made much more secure. Armed guards at school, is that a good idea? Doubtful. What do we arm them with and who pays? Are they effective? Wasn't there an armed guard at Columbine High School? Having their armed guard didn't seem to make a difference.

I've heard a lot about how mental health needs to be addressed in this discussion. I've heard people say that someone who is mentally ill and can't get a gun will just do something with another weapon. I think that is very true. However, do you think a movie theater full of people may have a better chance against a sword wielding psycho or someone who can fire 30 bullets in 30 seconds? Also, are we now going to force every person to undergo mental health screening? How would this help? Who pays for it? If someone has a problem and is therefore denied a right to buy a gun, couldn't they just buy one at a gun show? Why not background checks for everyone, everywhere? It kind of makes a lot of sense.

I'm not saying get rid of all guns. I got my first gun when I was eight years old. I got a .22 Remington rifle that my father gave to me with a modified stock, so I could hold it at my age. We went to ranges and yes, my father was a responsible gun owner. However, he never saw the need for an assault rifle - as we were not in the army.

So, I have to ask, why all the loopholes? Why no regulation? What is the big deal? Why is it harder to adopt a dog than to obtain a gun? Does that make sense? Lawn Darts (Jarts) are no longer legal because three people died using them. How many mass shootings have we had in Connecticut in the last few years? Newtown, the lottery office and the beer distributor. When does it stop? When is our state government going to stand up and do something? When it happens again, will the committee and our state senators and representatives realize it is indeed their fault?

Sincerely,

Robin Mason