

Ladies and Gentlemen of the committee,

I am heartbroken at the loss of the innocents that were mercilessly taken away at Sandy Hook. I pray for the families and friends of the murdered children and staff members as well as the survivors of that day, including the first responders.

Sandy Hook has just reminded us of the evil that exists in this world! Evil cannot be legislated away by banning inanimate objects. Evil has been with the human race since our beginning, well before the first firearm was ever imagined. The only way to confront evildoers who utilize deadly force is with the immediate use of deadly force in return, through the use of tools that so many want to remove from the citizenry.

Putting police officers in schools to provide security is an idea on the right track. However, it can only be assumed that the presence of one or two officers will deter another tragic attack, but it would be more effective with more officers. This can and will become very expensive for the schools and municipalities. If there is an emergency elsewhere, will those officers be recalled by their departments, away from the school? Remember, we are looking for solutions to the problem, not well-intentioned ideas.

Speaking of well-intentioned ideas, current law prohibits anyone other than law enforcement from possessing a firearm on school grounds or at school related activities. Law abiding citizens follow the laws, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE CRIMINALS? If someone has a permit to carry pistols and revolvers in this state, they have already been fingerprinted and checked out by local, state and federal law enforcement. If after obtaining a permit, a permit holder gets charged with a felony or certain misdemeanors, they lose their permit. Why then, if one has been deemed to be of honorable character, are citizens not allowed to be on school grounds with their sidearm? Granted, the current terms of carry in the state are for open or concealed, but I would totally support the requirement that the firearms carried in such sensitive areas as schools, are to be concealed! There is no reason to alarm the public or to make one's self the target of an attack.

I am opposed to the idea of "arming" school staff. I have trained at the firing range while in the military, as well as alongside law enforcement personnel and I have seen people who would rather not carry or even shoot a firearm. These persons are less likely to make themselves proficient in the use of such tools, so forcing them to do so could be more harmful than constructive. However, if the staff member has obtained a pistol permit I believe that they should be allowed to discreetly carry their sidearm within the school grounds.

Armed private security, whether uniformed or plain clothed, is an idea that I think can play a role in securing our schools. We would not have the concern of them being recalled, as we would with law enforcement officers. Visitors to the schools would immediately be greeted by a guard and sign in as is typical in many schools right now, but there will also be delivery and service areas of the building that will require the full time presence of guards. Roving posts inside and outside of the building would be required as well. I only hope that the idea of security does not go so far as to introduce TSA-type standards to the schools, for the sake of freedom and finances.

Freedom's price is often redeemed in blood and we are somewhat accustomed to that when referring to our military or our law enforcement officers. Those costs are very high, but one should also step back and ponder for a moment, the cost of freedom on December 14th. The lives lost on that day should be remembered and cherished.

Very respectfully,  
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