

To whom it may concern,

My name is Aaron Rodriguez. I am a resident of Stratford. I have been living in Connecticut for close to 4 years . I am writing in response to the issues of gun violence prevention. First let me say I was horrified by the events at Sandy hook in Newtown. I am a parent of 2 young children and the violence that occurred there was a new low for our society. I understand the need for change regarding gun laws. I am a gun owner and a law abiding citizen. I have saw some of the bills being discussed. while I agree with some of them, some I cannot understand. In the last couple of months legal gun owners have, I feel, been under attack. We have been called "nazis", "nuts", "zealots", among other things. Since I am a member of the N.R.A. some have said we are complicit with the events at Sandy hook. My concern is why are law abiding gun owners now being treated like ownership is like a scarlet letter? I hear words being used like seize,ban,confiscate. Those are words associated with criminal activity. Those words are now being used in regard to law abiding gun owners. I grew up in the south bronx for over 20yrs. I lost friends to gun violence. It all came from illegal handguns. Not "assault weapons". What is being done to address this? I havent seen anything.This society and government releases violent felons and repeat offenders with a plea bargain or parole. In this state we had a early release program where close to over 700 inmates were put back in jail after their release. I would say more than half of those arrested for weapons possession are rearrested for the same crime. Then they are released on parole again. How many times before they kill someone? Im not going to get into a debate about the 2nd amendment like others. There are many other ways to make this state safer without hurting the law abiding. How about stiffer sentences for illegal weapons possession. Strict background checks like the one I had. Stiffer sentences for anyone making a straw purchase for someone.Limit firearm purchases to one per month. And make mandatory a safe to store your weapons. Common sense laws instead of knee jerk reactions. Are the criminals going to register their weapons or turn in their high capacity magazines? Are they going to get "liability" insurance or pay a 50% ammo tax? No,they are not. Why are we being held accountable for others illegal actions? Im sure you will find that most citizens with a permit are the ones who break the law the least. We hold ourselves to a higher standard with the responsibility gun ownership brings. We always hear of mass shootings or murders in the news, as well we should. However, we never hear when a gun is used to prevent a crime or save a life. In the last year the FBI said guns were used to stop a crime over 2 million times in this country. We are not part of the problem. Will a "assault weapons" ban change things. No. It is not a panacea for what i happening today. I just hope in these hearings that gun owners voices are heard. Please treat us fair. Do not prejudge us. We are americans just like you. I ask you to look at all the bills being discussed with a open mind. Be able to tell the difference between reasonable and unreasonable Do not punish the law abiding gun owners in this state for the actions of one one person. Are the laws being discussed fair or are they feel good laws? Are they a citizens need or a politicians ambition? I am a father. I am a husband. I am a union ironworker. I am a veteran and I love my country. I am a law abiding citizen. I am a gun owner. I want to thank you for taking the time to have read my statement.