

I am writing to voice my opposition to proposed gun control legislation that will restrict my ownership of military style weaponry, high capacity magazines, increased taxes on ammunition and requirements to maintain liability insurance on firearms.

I am a law abiding gun owner, father, veteran, police officer, and recreational shooter. I am a responsible gun owner and I risk being criminalized and penalized should you decide to ban the ownership of military style weapons. I own one military style rifle which I purchased legally. I wanted it because it is similar to the rifle I carried while in the service as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army. I have it securely locked away from my children, as are my other firearms.

As a police officer, I have been shot at by a criminal with an illegally possessed firearm. I know firsthand the dangers inherent in firearms in the hands of criminals. But criminals do not care about the laws they break. Don't penalize me for the illegal actions of a criminal or someone with mental health or emotional issues.

As a police officer, I know firsthand that the Police cannot be everywhere all of the time. We are a limited human resource, limited by budgetary constraints and by constraints of time. Law abiding citizens have the right to possess firearms for their protection because the Police cannot always be in the right place at the right time. Those law abiding citizens have the right to arm themselves as they see fit, whether it be a handgun with a large capacity magazine, or a rifle with a detachable magazine and military style accessories.

I do not believe that the banning of high capacity magazines would deter an armed criminal, intent on committing large scale violence from committing that violence. It takes very little time to affect a magazine change, whether it be with a handgun or a rifle with a detachable magazine. You need only look at the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings. In that incident, a mentally unstable person, using two handguns conducted seventeen magazine changes. Those magazines were a mix of high capacity AND restricted capacity.

As a recreational shooter, I am already faced with the prospect of expensive ammunition costs. The notion of increasing taxes on ammunition is unfair to one group of people (law abiding shooters) and will not deter a criminal from committing gun violence if they are intent of breaking the law.

I am also opposed to any law requiring liability insurance for firearms. Again, law abiding citizens who have done nothing wrong will be required to spend even more hard earned money and will not deter a criminal in possession of an illegal gun from being a criminal.

I am also opposed to yearly registration fees for my firearms. This is just another burdensome, onerous tax on law abiding gun owners.

I am not opposed to requiring background checks on all gun sales/purchases, including at gun shows, even private party sales. I recently sold a pistol to another Connecticut resident via a private transaction. I filled out the required paperwork and called the State Police for an

authorization. It was simple. As long as there is a process and personnel in place to conduct these sales seven days a week and at odd hours, why not?

What I cannot accept is a registration database of all registered guns and their owners. Any system put in place for conducting background checks must not retain that information for extended periods of time.

Ours is an open and free society with a long established history of gun ownership, for hunting, recreational shooting and personal protection. Those proponents for gun control would argue that the countries of Europe have significantly fewer instances of gun violence. I would argue that those countries have either confiscated their citizen's weapons, such as England, or they never had a history of widespread gun ownership. The United States history of widespread gun ownership is unique, a history and right supported by the 2nd Amendment and more locally, the Connecticut Constitution.

I ask all of you to not react in a knee jerk way to the terrible tragedy which occurred in Newtown on December 14th. As any person would be, I am horrified at what happened. I have young children. I worry for their safety. But restricting law abiding gun owners does not make our society safer. I urge you to do your jobs and to legislate reasonably and with compromise for my rights afforded by the U.S. Constitution and the Connecticut Constitution.

Thank you.

Adam S. Lazinsk, Avon