

Dear Task Force:

When my husband and I moved to Newtown two-and-a-half years ago, our first son was five months old, and we quickly fell in love with the park where children could visit Mrs. Rabbit's house, the creamery where children could run in the grass and watch the cows while eating ice cream, and the farm with the corn maze and pumpkin patch, owned by the same family who also owns the Christmas tree farm where we bought our tree for our first Christmas as a family. We chose Newtown because we thought it was the perfect place for us to raise our children, to teach them about what it means to be members of a community.

Six ago as I drove my older son home from preschool, I pulled over to allow a funeral procession for one of the young victims of the December 14th shooting to pass. I watched a young man plant a Charlie Brown Christmas tree on a hillside which had become a spontaneous memorial and surround it with twenty-six candy canes. I watched a middle-aged couple carry paper cranes to the corner where we'd sung Christmas carols with our friends and neighbors two weeks earlier. I watched the police officer directing traffic cry openly as people came from every direction carrying flowers and teddy bears and candles. The grief in our little town was so thick that I could hardly bear it.

I'm writing you today to ask that you do everything in your power to prevent this from ever happening again. I support the legislation proposed by Connecticut Against Gun Violence.

I'm asking you to take swift and meaningful action to create sensible and responsible gun laws that will protect my children, who are nine months old and almost three years old and who will someday attend Sandy Hook Elementary School, or the school that will replace it. I want to put them on the school bus without worrying that someone could walk into their classrooms and put eleven bullets in them.

No one should be able to put eleven bullets in a six-year-old. No one should have to experience the grief that will always be imprinted on our town.

Thank you so much for your time and attention.

Aimee Pokwatka

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Sandy Hook, Connecticut