

Dear Committee Chair and Committee Members,  
My name is Amy Gibson and my husband Keith Gibson and I live in Bridgeport.  
I am testifying to the need to seriously consider taking stronger gun control measures in Connecticut.

On December 14, 2012 my husband sent me a text to say there was a shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary school. It was about 10 AM. I was on a break from teaching middle school band. I immediately sent Nelba Marquez-Greene a text. I then tried to find out as much information I could. My 7th grade students came in at 10:30. I have no idea how I taught them, but I did. I finally heard from a friend that Jimmy had their 8 year old son Isaiah, but Nelba was still waiting to find Ana. My heart sank and I started to pray. At noon, I had to take a group of students to sing Holiday Songs at the Government Center in downtown Stamford. I was glued to my phone praying for Ana to be found unharmed. I saw someone posted on Facebook "20 elementary school children were killed." I felt like wailing, but my students were singing "Jingle Bells" for the senior citizens. I went numb.

As soon as I got back to to my school, I called my friends and said I would be in Newtown as soon as possible with food. It was 2 PM and there was still no word on Ana. I wasn't able to get to Newtown until around 4PM due to roads being closed and media trucks taking over this small town. I felt like I was in a movie. When I arrived at the Marquez-Greene house, I didn't need to ask. The faces in that house said it all. In the hours and days that followed, I did things that are still unbelievable to me. I spent hours going through over 5,000 pictures on Nelba's Facebook page to make a slideshow for the home going service. I looked at the face of sweet Ana from birth to death in utter shock that her life was so senselessly taken. How could this be?

As a teacher, I am on edge about the safety of my students. Security had been tightened. We were all asked to wear our badges and teams were put together to make sure the building was safer. But I know what I know from being Nelba's friend: no amount of security can stop a person that is mentally unstable with a weapon and ammunition enough to destroy an entire school. The shooter at Sandy Hook Elementary School was not buzzed in, he shot his way in. No security system could prevent that, only limiting access to such weapons.

When an innocent 6th grade student asked "Mrs. Gibson, would you stop a bullet for me?," I answered "YES!" without hesitation. I wish that we could rewind to December 13 2012 and this question would have never even come across the mind of a 6th grader.

We need to make our schools safer. We need to start with gun control.

Thank you for your time,  
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