

I am a parent and a gun owner. As a parent, I had an immediate visceral reaction to the horror of the Newtown shooting. Even though it was not my child killed that day, just the thought what if? pained me. I offer my deepest sympathies to all victims of this tragedy, and the only other meaningful thing that I can give: I pledge to raise my children in a responsible manner, so that they will become good citizens, and they will never allow such evil to come to pass in their midst. When they are of a responsible enough age, this will include training in the use of firearms.

This committee is here today to discuss potential solutions to “gun violence”. In my estimation, it is absurd to discuss any one type of violence as being more or less important than any other. If Adam Lanza had instead burned down the school in Newtown, would the tragedy have been any less horrible? Yet I am sure we would not be here today discussing legislation on gasoline containers. It is sickening to see some people try to exploit such a heartbreaking tragedy in order to push their own political agenda.

The fact is that Adam Lanza did not legally possess the firearms used in Newtown, and broke many laws just in obtaining them, not least of which was murder. The sad fact is, there is no firearm law that could have prevented the tragedy in Newtown. The perpetrator was a madman bent on violence. To assume we could have kept firearms out of his hands is as ridiculous as to assume we could have kept him from obtaining any illegal drug on the streets. *A criminal does not obey the law.*

The rifle used was not a so-called “assault weapon.” It works the same way as any old cowboy six shooter in that one trigger-pull fires one shot. There is no “spraying” of bullets. True assault rifles are not semiautomatic, they are fully automatic, and already heavily regulated and taxed in this country.

The source of violence is not in an inanimate object. It lies within ourselves. The notion that guns are the source of violence is as absurd as the notion that handing someone a spatula makes them a chef. We would be better served addressing the real causes of violence, instead of trying to legislate our way into living in safe little plastic bubbles. I want to remind my fellow countrymen, that Benjamin Franklin, one of the great founders of this republic, stated that “Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.” I oppose giving up the rights that our forefathers fought and died for just to receive a false hope of safety.