

Members of the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group,

I am a Norwalk, CT resident, tax payer, gun owner, and voter. Having grown up in nearby Monroe, CT, my family, my friends, and I have also been shaken by the tragic shooting that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary last month.

As elected representatives and legislators, you are faced with the difficult tasks of providing solace to families of the victims, developing solutions that will keep our children safe, and navigating the nuanced constitutional issues of privacy and firearms rights.

To the extent there are legislative solutions to Newtown-like events, I urge you to avoid knee jerk proposals in favor of effective and responsible ones. Unfortunately, I would characterize the details and timing of the initial gun proposals as the exact opposite. In large part, they appear to be symbolic, ineffective, difficult to enforce, and in some cases punitive and discriminatory.

For example, the focus on semi-automatic rifles seems misguided. Connecticut's longstanding Assault Weapons Ban makes our gun laws some of the most restrictive in the country. Of the nearly 1,200 murders in CT during the last 10 years, a grand total of **4** of them were committed with rifles. Our state does not have a semi-automatic rifle problem.

I fear that proposals to limit magazine capacity will have the unintended consequence of making us less safe. The Supreme Court of the US (Castle Rock vs Gonzales) has determined that law enforcement has no duty to protect individual citizens. This responsibility falls on us. Magazine restrictions will do nothing but disarm lawful citizens. Criminals will not reciprocate. Local tragedies such as the Chesire, CT home invasion should remind us that no ammunition limit is "reasonable" when multiple attackers threaten the safety of our families.

With all due respect to the late Senator Pat Moynihan, the tactic of restricting and taxing ammunition is both ineffective in dissuading criminals and punitive for lawful gun owners. The Newtown shooter killed his mother to steal her guns before massacring 20 small children. Are CT legislators asking us to believe that an ammunition tax would have foiled his plans?

Lastly, proposals to raise handgun permit fees in addition to a recent 100% increase are as discriminatory as the poll taxes abolished in the 1960's.

I appreciate the political pressure to "do something" about the tragedy that occurred in our own state. Nevertheless, I find it less than responsible to draft proposals in the absence of a completed investigation of the Newtown shooting.

As citizens of Connecticut, it is impossible to detach ourselves from the emotions of the Newtown tragedy. As elected representatives and legislators, it is your responsibility to do so. Again, to the extent legislative solutions exist for the issues this committee is discussing, I urge you to prioritize effective proposals and to resist the temptation to recommend "feel good" legislation that will do nothing more than infringe upon the rights and safety of your law abiding constituents.

Sincerely,

Name Withheld,

Norwalk, CT