

Dear Esteemed Members of the Committee,

I felt compelled to write you today in response to the tumultuous debate both within the State of Connecticut and across the United States regarding gun control and the problem of gun crime. I am an alumni of Trinity College, supporter of law enforcement, and as someone who devoted ten years of my life to a career as a highly trained professional in the field of educational security. I am also an avid sportsman and gun owner.

I am truly frustrated by the recent attempts by politicians across the country in their reactionary and ill-concieved notions of how to prevent another tragedy such as we have seen in Sandy Hook, Virginia Tech, and far too many others. Speaking from a position of experience, it is far too common to take strong measures in reaction to a problem, when it would have been far more productive to have taken proactive measures to prevent such problems before they became tragedies. Properly funding, equipping, and training those who are tasked with the often overwhelming job of keeping the public safe is an essential part, if not the most important part, of protecting us all from crime and disorder. And I dare say that we have utterly failed in that regard. Layoffs of State Police Troopers, funding cuts to municipalities, and the general economic downturn experienced by many cities and towns in Connecticut have all contributed to what i see as a dire state of affairs. To further burden the people and agencies who have the near heroic task of keeping the public safe with new, poorly concieved laws aimed soley at further stripping the rights of law abiding citizens, such as myself, while at the same time continuing to reduce the resources we provide to those agencies, is not only irresponsible, but is nothing short of reprehensible. Introducing penalties, taxes, and punitive restrictions on the many thousands of responsible sportsmen like myself while completely ignoring the problem of our underfunded, understaffed, and underequipped public safety entities will not only fail to prevent tragedies like Sandy Hook, but it will lead to us being even more vulnerable to the criminal elements, and perhaps even turn honest citizens into criminals simply for being avid marksmen. Or worse yet: turn our heroes, our police, our protectors, into common criminals, such as we have seen in New York.

Furthermore, such new laws have the added effect of hreatening the livelihoods of tens of thousands of Connecticut residents who have jobs related to firearms manufacturing and sales. Past attempts at restricting firearms manufacturing and ownership have already been met by strong objections from large manufacturers, such as Colt, and threats to move valuable jobs and revenue out of the state; something that Connecticut absolutely cannot afford.

I ask you to take the responsible approach and consult with those in a position of experience and work wiht them to create reforms that strengthen and empower those who devote their lives to the safety and security of the

public, not ones that seek to strip the rights of the law abiding citizenry or jeopardize the livelihoods of those who work in the firearms industry. I ask that you oppose the current agenda of those who seek to weaken our civil rights and jeopardize our safety simply for political gain. The answer to this problem lies with responsible, informed, and calculated reform; not by irresponsible, reactionary legislation.

Thank you very much for your attention and time in reading my letter, and I hope that i can count on you to make the right choice in the time to come.

Yours Truly,

Benjamin Fay
East Granby, CT