

The acts Sandy Hook are a complete tragedy and as a parent I cannot begin to imagine the heartache of those parents and children. Obviously this act must be examined to determine ways that it might be prevented in the future. Note that I said might, because in all truth, a determined madman can find a way to hurt and kill others.

I am a law abiding citizen with a hand gun permit. I own a Modern Sporting Rifle with a Standard Capacity Magazine. I am also a responsible gun owner; either my guns are locked up or are on my person always.

I also strongly believe in the Second Amendment of our Constitution! The United States Constitution's Second Amendment and the Connecticut Constitution both provide for the right to bear arms. These are not gifts from the State that allows us citizens to bear arms but rights that a proscribed and must not be infringed. Note that this has nothing to do with hunting; nowhere in either document is hunting mentioned. Reading of the Federalists papers should be a must for all to begin to understand the reasoning behind these rights.

We must be careful to ensure that any proposed legislation does more than provide a feeling or appearance of safety. I strongly urge you to look at providing armed security at our schools. This could be done by having a resource type officer and I firmly believe that if done correctly could have a very positive effect on our children. The policer officer could become a role model, would probably help quench any bully actions, could provide instruction such as D.A.R.E, etc. In short, the officer could become part of the school and children's extended family and not just an armed officer.

Changing laws such as increasing penalties for infractions about having a gun on school properties are laudable, but will have little effect on safety. There is already a law preventing firearms on school grounds and unfortunately we have seen what little effect that had. Ultimately one must understand that laws are for people who obey them and criminals simply ignore laws.

Mental health needs be looked at. The destruction of the family unit needs be considered as part of our problems. Violence in music and video also must be

examined especially in regards to our young people. These all have a great bearing on the problem of violence of today.

As a person who has a handgun permit, I have already had to go through a process including a background check and fingerprinting. So we law abiding gun owners are not the problem; we already follow the law.

Limiting ammunition purchases is not an answer. Taxes on ammunition are just another way for the State to raise revenue and have no effect on safety. Please be aware that sport shooters such as myself go through quite a bit of ammunition. On a typical day at the shooting range, I can go through about 300 rounds in about 2 hours of target practice. Target shooting to me is probably the equivalent of golfing to some of you.

On the point of Modern Sporting Rifles. The AR-15 is a Modern Sporting Rifle. It is simply an very accurate platform which can be customized with things such as lights, lasers, handgrips, stocks, triggers, etc. being a standard platform which means that it is possible to mix and match components. It is not an "automatic" and is not the firearm that the military uses. Replace its plastic and steel with a wood stock and it is not much different that weapons from a hundred years ago in terms of capability. The Winchester Model 1905 is one such example with its detachable magazine.

Looking at the FBI homicide statistics of 2011, one can easily see that of the over 8000 homicides with a gun, less than 400 were committed with a rifle which is even less than the number of homicides that occurred because of hand or feet. In Connecticut in 2011, there was exactly 1 homicide through use of a rifle. Unfortunately 2012 statistics for Connecticut will not be so. Please, let's not just propose legislation to "do something" and trample all over the legal and law abiding gun owners while at the same time having little or no effect on the safety of our citizens. That will ultimately let the victims of the Sandy Hook tragedy down. It essential to determine the real causes of these problems and take a deliberate and thoughtful and comprehensive approach to these issues.

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