

Thank you for the allowing me to add my testimony regarding gun safety and legislation in Connecticut.

My name is Carl Anderson I am a life-long resident of eastern Connecticut. I was born and raised in Lebanon and have lived there for the past fifteen years with my wife and two daughters. I am a casual collector of firearms and I enjoy recreational shooting and hunting occasionally. I have a class three federal firearms license which classifies me as a collector of curios and relics. I hold a Connecticut hunting and fishing license, I recently took a handgun training course and will soon be applying for my state permit to purchase and carry pistols, and I am a member of the NRA.

I am very concerned about the extreme measures regarding gun control being discussed in the media and in Congress and which have already been taken by other states such as New York and which are now being considered here in Connecticut. I feel that much of what is happening is knee jerk reactions to what happened in Sandy Hook. Let me say that what happened there was a horrific tragedy and my heart goes out to all who have been touched by it. I am a father of two school aged girls and cannot imagine the heartache those folks are facing. They are all in my family's prayers.

This is not the time for panic or for political gain on either side; it is the time for rational thought and thorough analysis of the root cause of these kinds of tragedies. I know it's easy to point the finger at the weapons used by Adam Lanza but the fact of the matter is that he was mentally ill and it was no secret to those around him. Had he been able to be professionally diagnosed and receive help there is a good chance those precious little ones and the brave teachers and staff at Sandy Hook Elementary school would still be with us. Some people are saying that if these laws were in place already the tragedy at Sandy Hook would never have happened. That is a bold statement and one that has no basis in fact. Adam Lanza was sick and he would have found another way to kill if he could not have gotten his hands on his mother's guns. What would have prevented it would have been Adam Lanza getting treatment for his mental illness.

Adam Lanza stole the guns he used from his mother. No law or ban would have stopped him and those types of measures won't stop the next mentally ill person who seeks to do harm. Timothy McVeigh killed 168 people, 19 of them children, and wounded 450 others without any guns. The sad truth is we live in a broken world where sick people do evil things. Just a day or two after the Sandy Hook tragedy a man in China stabbed 22 children. Sick people are going to hurt others whether or not they have access to guns. Certainly we cannot ban or restrict everything that can possibly cause harm. Alcohol would have to be banned and cars would have to be limited to 30 miles per hour since anything over that could be deadly in an accident.

Drunk driving is illegal but we don't ban certain cars or require alcohol purchases to be registered or limited in volume because most people who drive cars and drink alcohol do so responsibly. Likewise, most people who own guns do so responsibly. We should not ignore the Constitution of the United States of America by passing laws that violate the Second

Amendment rights of law abiding American citizens. Likewise we should not violate Article 1 Section 9 Clause 3 of the Constitution which expressly disallows any ex post facto laws by trying to outlaw guns and magazines that were obtained and are currently possessed legally. Taking those kinds of actions to ban and restrict certain guns, ammunition and magazines will do nothing to help solve the problem of violence.

Shooting people is illegal, yet shootings happen. That is all the hard evidence we need to prove that laws are not going to protect us. Criminals by definition do not obey the law. Laws do not stop criminals, that is an undisputable fact, and we have overflowing jails to prove it. I am confident that Adam Lanza was not the least bit concerned about what the legal consequences of his actions were going to be even had he not taken his own life before he could be caught. Banning or restricting guns, magazines and ammunition was tried before in 1994 on a national scale and it did nothing to curb gun violence. We in Connecticut still have the same ban and it has done nothing to stop gun violence, as evidenced by Sandy Hook.

Please do the right thing and put the brakes on any new legislation and step back to find the root causes of violence of any kind and find real solutions. Please address the proliferation of violent video games, violent movies and television shows and most importantly the health care industry's failures in treating mentally ill individuals as well as the state's failure to be proactive in offering assistance to mentally ill people. Often times nothing can be done until a mentally ill person commits a crime. That is ridiculous and irresponsible and shifting the blame onto the law abiding gun owners who have rights is just the easy, cowardly way to dodge the real issue of fixing the mental health problem.

Please don't ignore the Constitution of the United States of America, which we all, as American citizens, are obligated to protect. The Second Amendment is clear, we have the right to keep and bear arms with no restrictions. George Washington said this, "A free people ought not only to be armed and disciplined, but they should have sufficient arms and ammunition to maintain a status of independence from any who might attempt to abuse them, which would include their own government." I am not suggesting that Americans need to be armed to protect ourselves from our own government at this point, I am only saying that the spirit of the second amendment was that Americans should be well armed and supplied for whatever the future may hold. It is part of our heritage, it is part of who we are as independent thinking Americans, it is part of our freedom that was bought with and protected by the blood of our fathers.

Respectfully,

Carl S. Anderson