

I truly hope we can bring some common sense to this debate and agree on meaningful steps to reduce gun violence. I admit that I don't understand the deep and strident stance of some of the opposition to restrictions to access and the types of guns available. We cannot make the progress we should make if the fears of conspiracy and threats to the second amendment aren't addressed to some extent - I know, not easy.

I do recall having lunch two years ago in a restaurant in VA next to a gun show in progress. The restaurant was mobbed mostly with attendees of the show. It was a real eye-opener for me. The camouflage clothing, the trucks with gun racks, the camaraderie, etc. made me appreciate the ingrained cultural dimensions of guns and gun ownership.

I also understand that addressing the mental health dimensions of gun violence will be a major cultural, legal and economic challenge.

I was a member of the NRA as a Boy Scout and enjoyed hunting with my Dad. He had a double-barrel shotgun and said "If you can't hit a rabbit or pheasant in two shots you don't deserve another." I cannot see any justification for semi-automatic assault-style rifles and large capacity magazines in the hands of sportsmen.

One, of course, can debate the real meaning and intent of the second amendment, but that is largely moot at this point.

I was happy to see surveys of our public school teachers who overwhelmingly opposed bringing guns into the school and arming members of the staff. Our law enforcement officials also largely agree that this would be ill-advised. If more guns in our country were the answer, we'd have the safest country on the planet.

Here's a number of items that, in my opinion, deserve your attention and consideration:

- Clarify and strengthen the CT ban on assault weapons
- Comprehensive background checks on gun sales and ammunition sales (Senator Blumenthal)
- Closing existing loop holes (gun shows, etc.)
- Gun registration and gun sale and transfer tracking
- Gun trafficking legislation (Senators Kirk and Gillibrand)
- Recommendations on mental health policy - early warning, intervention, treatment availability - all very difficult to be sure.

We all appreciate your efforts with this most important issue.

*Charlie*

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