

To Senator Looney, Rep. Miner and Members of the Task Force Committee:

I am Colleen Swain. I live in Sandy Hook, in a neighborhood where four families lost their children in the Sandy Hook School Massacre. I urge you to support the legislative proposals submitted by CT Against Gun Violence. This is an historic moment for our state. What we accomplish here, in the state that experienced the second worst shooting in the nation, will go a long way in gaining national support to influence Congress in Washington. I want Sandy Hook and Newtown to be remembered as the tipping point that brought about positive change to end gun violence in this country.

If our Founding Fathers knew how the words they wrote in their time has caused so much pain, and insanity within our 21st century society, they would be appalled. Shame on the NRA and NSSF in Newtown for defending the bottom line of gun manufacturers and for demanding that more guns in civilian hands are the answer to keep our children safe. That is not only ludicrous, it's irresponsible. And it's insane. Let our law enforcement do their job. For NSSF to name-call this Connecticut gun safety legislation as a "knee-jerk" reaction to the horror at Sandy Hook School is totally disrespectful to the sweet children who lost their lives so brutally, to the dedicated educators who lost theirs trying to protect them, to their families, to our community, and to our state and nation. Their bodies were devastated. They never had a chance. Safety-conscious gun owners need to stand up and say enough is enough. As with any dangerous product, guns need to be regulated to ensure a safe, and more peaceful, modern-day society.

I support an assault-weapons ban, limiting magazine capacity to seven rounds, no grandfathering of assault weapons, and removing assault weapons from the state. This is our first priority so that criminals, people with mental health issues, or even those with no mental health history who unpredictably snap out of control, have no easy access to these military killing machines. I also support background checks for every gun transaction to ensure that only law-abiding, responsible, safety-conscious citizens own guns.

As with any product that has potential to inflict lethal harm, gun regulations are necessary to ensure safe use. This is common-sense legislation that respects the Second Amendment and the rights of safety-conscious, responsible gun owners. We will never be safe until this legislation is in effect. Please protect us, not gun manufacturers.

Thank you for your attention to this critically important issue.

Colleen D. Swain