

Mr. Chairmen and members of the committee, I am Lisa Napolitano and I live in Columbia

I do not support Senate Bill number 1. - AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS FROM VIOLENCE.

In 1991, my husband Rich and I moved with our 4 children and 2 dogs from the suburbs to the country. We wanted to live in a more rural environment and were thrilled to have a rear lot adjacent to hundreds of acres of woods.

One afternoon in the fall of 1992, our 12 year old son was behind our house with his friend and the dogs. He heard the dogs barking, and then a gun shot rang out. He called the dogs but they didn't come so he came to the house to check on them. One dog had come in a few minutes before. There was no sign of the other. I went out looking and eventually found our dog. He had been shot directly in the chest and was lying dead in a pool of blood. I went back to the house and called Rich who worked evenings, to come home. Meanwhile I was trying to console our 4 heartbroken children and friend.

It was almost dark when Rich got home and we immediately went out to retrieve our dog, the body was gone but the blood was there. We called the police.

When the officer arrived we related what had happened. A second officer came with a tracking dog. The K-9 tracked from the blood spot to our neighbor's back door. The officers spoke with our neighbor but he refused to let them search the house and without a warrant they could not enter. If he didn't shoot our dog, he knew who did.

We discovered that several years earlier this neighbor had had his right to hunt in the state of Connecticut permanently revoked due to an assault of a DEP officer. This man had continued to illegally draw hunting licenses and permits to hunt on private land. The prosecuting attorney refused to bring charges. With no body, there couldn't be charges regarding our dog, but 3 of the illegal hunting permits were within the Statue of Limitations and should have been prosecuted. The Prosecuting Attorney's excuse was the courts were too busy and the case was not important enough. Because our neighbor never faced charges, a few years later he petitioned the town for a Town Pistol Permit and received the right to carry in Columbia.

I was still home alone with 4 children every night. So Rich and I obtained Pistol Permits and firearms. Having the ability to defend my family while my husband was at work gave me security. When I lived in suburbia with family and neighbors all around I would never have thought to own a firearm. Living in an isolated home is a different situation. I deserve the ability to defend my family, myself and our property. Additionally, I have injured my shoulders and find it very difficult to hold a long gun to my shoulder. A "military style" pistol grip offers me the ability to use and control a long gun. Should I not be able to proficiently arm myself with a long gun?

I trust that members of this committee will regard the needs and rights of each citizen of Connecticut when considering new regulations and legislation. That new legislation will not infringe on citizen's rights protected by the 2nd Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and Article 1 section 15 of the Constitution of Connecticut. That Legislators are mindful of the original intent and of the obligation to view this situation in the broad scope of history, considering possible unintended consequences and not merely reacting to a single, horrific incident.