

My name is Craig Charles Fishbein. I am a practicing attorney, a member of the Wallingford Town Council and a member of the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (as appointed thereto by Governor Dannel P. Malloy).

Over the past month or so, I have heard of many gun control proposals that are being made here in Connecticut. All of these suggestions are apparently being made in the wake of the Newtown tragedy. Unfortunately, none of the proposals would have in any way effected the Newtown tragedy. That is because, we already have some very harsh gun control laws here in Connecticut and, as is becoming apparently clear to those in the general public, criminals don't abide by laws. That is what makes them criminals, and additional gun control laws will only prevent law-abiding citizens from protecting themselves.

You see, amongst the heinous events of December 14, 2012 and, putting aside for the moment the 27 or so murders that he committed, Adam Lanza broke numerous other laws when he stole his mother's firearms, broke into the school by discharging a firearm, entered the school with firearms. All of these things violated the law, laws that are already in place and the answer is not to make more laws just to say that, "We did something."

I feel for the parents and the survivors of the Newtown tragedy, as I am sure that you all do.

It is unfortunate that Adam Lanza took his own life in the series of events that took place on December 14, 2012. It is also sad that, had he survived, due to the legislature's recent addressing of penalties for violent criminals, that he would not be eligible for the death penalty. But nonetheless, he did not, and what I am faced with are proposals to limit my access to firearms. To ban firearms which I legally purchased and possess, and that is not in any way fair.

You should not pass a ban on magazines having a capacity of ten or more bullets. Many firearms, mostly handguns, are made and sold as an ordinary course, with magazines that hold 13 to 30 rounds. Many people in Connecticut own these firearms and the manufacturers do not make smaller magazines for these firearms. I have purchased them legally, under the strict confines of the laws that are currently on the books. Are you now to tell me, and my wife as she has firearms as well, that we have merely bought very expensive paperweights?

You should not expand the assault weapon ban. The current ban, statistically has done absolutely nothing to prevent crime. If anything, all it has done is to limit commerce in Connecticut. When people speak about assault weapons in the context of Connecticut, they do not know what they are speaking about. The firearm used in Newtown, for example, is not used (nor has it ever been used) by any police force or military force IN THE

WORLD! Yes, it is black and has some fancy things on it but, that is all. It is sort of like taking a Corvette body and putting a Volkswagen engine in it. It looks like a Corvette, but it isn't. The same thing here. Expanding the assault weapon ban will do absolutely nothing for public safety as the criminals don't register their guns that are currently banned under the current statute!

You should not eliminate the ability to purchase firearms and ammunition over the internet or ridiculously tax the same to try and prevent ownership. This will do nothing to effect public safety. People will just buy these items out of state and bring them here or transfer them here.

You must not abolish the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners. In my opinion, this overture is being made merely to make it more difficult for people to bring their appeals. Most of the people that appear before the Board are pro se and to provide for direct appeal to the Superior Court will not only unnecessarily burden the appellants but the Judiciary Branch, as well. The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners play an important function in the scheme of pistol permits and we fully and fairly review every appeal and look into the various issues that you are currently hearing about such as those having to do with mental health, past alleged conduct, alcohol usage and even the failure to fill out the required application itself.

Recently the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) recommended abolishing the Board, stating that municipalities don't have the ability to appeal from a decision of the Board. Their representations to you on this point are simply factually and legally incorrect. Under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (UAPA), codified at C.G.S. § 4-183, the municipalities have just as much right to appeal a decision of the Board as an appellant does.

You see, the problem here is like so much of what is being discussed, as with the gun issues, the people doing the talking know virtually nothing about guns and gun laws that are currently in place. I can faithfully say this as I speak from experience. I used to be anti-gun. In those days, I was just generally of the opinion that guns are bad, no matter who has them. I have, over the past decade or so, come to learn that law-abiding citizens of our state who have guns are the very last of our problems. I have come to learn through experience that I, as an attorney practicing family law in Connecticut, need to, and have the right to protect my family, first and foremost. I have also learned that, no matter what laws your infinite wisdom deem to be appropriate, that there will still be someone out there that will break those laws, possibly imperiling my family.

I respectfully request that you do not pass any legislation that in any way impacts upon my current ability to protect myself and my family.

Very truly yours,

Craig Charles Fishbein

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