

To members of the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group:

On May 11, 2012, in the New Haven courthouse I became a US Citizen - I had lived in this country for 8 years and welcomed the opportunity to embrace this country more fully as a citizen for me, my husband and my children.

On December 14, 2012, I was shaken to the core, like everyone around the world, by the events that took place at Sandy Hook. How could I have chosen to live in a country with my children and have something like this happen?

I believe if we stand up and make changes, this country will be better and I applaud the state of Connecticut for putting together this bipartisan legislative committee to act on issues concerning school security, guns and mental health. This is an opportunity for Connecticut to set an example and show the rest of the country how to make strong changes to legislation to make our communities safer.

Regarding guns in our society, I believe in the second amendment but I feel very strongly that the right to bear arms must have restrictions. Are people going to say they need a tank or even a nuclear weapon to protect their family? This task force needs to recommend getting assault weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines out of civilian hands - they just aren't necessary and as history has shown us, too dangerous.

I was saddened to hear about the shooting this week in Texas on the Lone star campus. However, not to diminish the pain and suffering of the 3 injured and in the hospital, I was glad that the numbers weren't higher - the weapon used was a handgun so thank goodness that individual didn't have an assault rifle or we might have been listening to a much dire story.

Since the shooting at Columbine in 1999, there have been 33 school shootings in the United States and 14 school shootings in the rest of the world combined. **Other countries around the world have safer communities - what is different? They have stricter and safer gun laws - get the assault weapons and the high capacity ammunition magazines off the street and our communities will be safer.**

Thank you

Dayna Pallant, Ridgefield CT