

To: asaferconnecticut@cga.ct.gov

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My name is Debby Butler, and I am a Killingworth resident. I have been a public school teacher for over 37 years, and I have spent my career in buildings very much like Sandy Hook Elementary School. I am also a mother of a public school employee and a grandmother of two children who attend public elementary school. Every one of us in this country finds the horrific incident of December 14th heartbreaking. However, the hysteria that has ensued is disappointing and not befitting the thoughtful treatment that should be given matters that affect the entire future of the state and all its citizens. It has resulted in a blizzard of hastily concocted bills that can be described in one word: OVERREACTION. The vast majority of these almost 100 bills do nothing that will prevent future tragedies, and only unfairly cripple the rights of Connecticut's many law-abiding gun owners, who already live under some of the strictest gun control laws in the nation.

Anyone who thinks that guns are too easy to get has not seen the lengthy, expensive, complicated, and often capriciously administered ordeals that I have seen family and friends go through in order to legally acquire or carry firearms. To further curtail their rights with laws that criminals will only ignore as they do the current ones is not what I call "doing something" if "something" means "something useful." And to demonize certain classes of firearms because they are too popular, or worse yet for their looks, is downright irrational.

I do question the parenting decisions of a mother who would leave her firearms accessible to her mentally deranged son. It was a mistake that she paid for with her life. Don't make the hundreds of thousands of peaceable, respectable, decent citizens who own firearms pay for her mistake with their freedom.

Many of these new prohibitions are not even enforceable in any practical sense, and some will inevitably result in litigation that will be costly to us taxpayers and wind up with them being overturned. Some will drive jobs out of the state, and all of them will foster a heightened disrespect for the law.

As a longtime professional educator, I give the new round of gun control bills a failing grade, and I urge the state to enforce the thousands of gun laws it already has on the books. Please pause, take a deep breath, and step back and carefully consider the unintended consequences of this new wave of laws that do nothing but punish law-abiding citizens.

Thank you.