

To the members of the gun violence prevention committee:

Growing up, hunting was an important part of my family. In addition to teaching me about safe gun use, my father passed down to me his love for the outdoors and the importance of wildlife conservation. Today, I am passing this same tradition down to my children. Personally, I want this commission to know that most (if not all) of the new purchase, registration, education and safe storage requirements that are being talked about in Connecticut these days are reasonable and appropriate things to do. Requiring a background check to be performed for all gun purchases, including sales at gun shows, is not a radical step, it is common sense. Limiting magazine sizes and raising the threshold of education and training we require for someone who wants to carry a concealed weapon in public is, again, not an infringement of my constitutional rights, it is smart public policy. So is requiring gun manufacturers to create the same kind of downstream traceability that VIN numbers have done for automobiles. We should seek to clean up, or rationalize, the many EXISTING gun regulations that exist and also reform our mental health laws, which make it too difficult for families to obtain care for and effectively keep dangerous, mentally ill sons and daughters from harming themselves or their neighbors.

I don't have all the answers, but I think it's important for this commission to know that not all hunters and gun owners are against smart and reasonable new gun laws. Personally, I believe that a quiet majority of gun owners have become very uncomfortable with the radical, polarizing positions and the bullying tactics used by the NRA. Wayne LaPierre and the NRA does not speak for me, and I needed to stand up today in order to make this point. I wish there was a grass roots, middle of the road organization that I, and other hunters and gun owners, could support. Because our voice is largely missing in this debate.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Don Kendall
Weston, CT