

Statement from:
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The tragic events at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14 mandate that the state and nation once and for all confront the issue of gun control. It is paramount that the young lives of the children killed that day ultimately have a deeper meaning than their untimely deaths, and that the bravery, and for some self-sacrifice, of the educators of Sandy Hook Elementary be recognized with the enactment of vigorous laws that begin to address gun violence. These educators were able to stand up to a crazed gunman hell-bent on mass destruction. Now our legislators must stand up to opponents of any change in gun laws and say, "Enough."

As a long-time Newtown resident who writes this with a broken heart, I urge our state legislators to ban the sale of high-powered, semiautomatic weapons and high-capacity magazines in the state of Connecticut. In addition, I believe all semiautomatic weapons already owned by state residents be required to be registered, with strict penalties for failure to do so. I further ask that in formulating any legislation, priority be given to the voices of those most affected by tragedies such as occurred in Newtown – law enforcement, first responders, doctors and nurses, mayors and other town officials, and, first and foremost, teachers and members of families that have been affected by gun violence. The voices against any meaningful change have dominated state and U.S. policy for too long at the exclusion of others, and their policies have failed in the most grotesque way.

A violent media culture, etc., certainly must all be addressed as well. But citizens of all the civilized nations of the world watch American-made movies and TV shows and play video games, and have mentally ill citizens. What alone separates them from us is the widespread availability of firearms, including semiautomatic weapons.

Once we begin to address the gun violence there will still be more to do. But the time to enact stringent gun control measures with teeth has come, and they must be implemented quickly. I refuse to accept that America is powerless to stop a lone madman from murdering a classroom full of small children. If we are, to paraphrase our president, not much else matters. I urge Connecticut lawmakers to lead the nation in enacting vigorous gun control measures that begin to turn the tide on gun violence and help prevent a horror like Sandy Hook from happening again.

Sincerely,

Donnette Dolzall