

The horrible events at Sandy Hook last month have shaken Connecticut to its core. We are forced to examine harsh realities that were perhaps easier to be philosophical about until they happened here in our own state. Those realities demand swift and decisive action, but neither quality is served well without a sober examination of where the true problems lie. I respectfully submit that they are not inherent in the community of law-abiding gun owners, or the weapons we possess.

The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States , and Section 15 of the First Article of the Connecticut Constitution, are very clear as to their intent. These rights are not about "legitimate sporting purposes", but about personal and national defense, neither of which is effective if hamstrung by needless restrictions that pose no hindrance to those who choose to threaten another's life or liberty.

The dismal failure of stringent gun control in cities like Chicago and Washington , D.C. does not give me confidence in the efficacy of similar measures here. The myriad proposals that seek to require gun owners' liability insurance, wholesale firearms registration, taxes and limits on ammunition and prohibition of internet sales thereof, increasing the already strict requirements for safe gun storage, and restrictions on ergonomic or cosmetic features and magazine capacities will, if made law, only inhibit those who choose to abide by them. Those otherwise inclined will find a way to do so. HB 5112, which proposes disclosure of pistol permit holders' names and addresses, is a particularly offensive proposal. It would, while providing no measure of increased public safety, expose myself and other permit holders to an unnecessary risk of targeting by criminals, and would essentially portray us in the same light as sex offenders. One would be hard-pressed to find a more scrupulously law-abiding demographic in our state than those of us who have passed the thorough vetting required to obtain a pistol permit.

These proposals will do nothing to curb the actions of those who are unable or unwilling to control their impulses to harm others, while essentially creating entire new classes of criminals out of harmless, law-abiding citizens at the stroke of a legislative pen. As a practical consideration, where would be found the resources in our debt-saddled state to deal with these new criminals, and if we have them, would they not be better aimed at enforcing existing laws that do in fact address criminal violence?

None of these proposals if made law will make any child safer. They merely put the lawful at an instant disadvantage when forced to confront the lawless, and pave the way for a monopoly of force by the government which is precisely what the Second Amendment was crafted to prevent.

I urge our state's government to turn its focus from further ineffective and unenforceable restrictions on those who pose no threat, and consider instead how best to enforce existing laws and enable parents and schools to provide effective security for children and credible deterrents to those who would harm them or anyone else. Thank you for your attention in this matter and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

Doug Parkhurst