

RE: Testimony for January 28, 2013 public hearing on gun safety

I oppose proposed bills banning assault weapons (SB-501), high capacity magazines (SB-504; SB-124; HB-5647), liability insurance and sales tax on ammunition (SB-140; HB-5452; HB-5268), and disclosure of names/addresses of persons holding pistol permits (HB-5112).

In light of the shootings at Sandy Hook, I can empathize with the shock and anger millions of people feel across our country. As a mother of a small child, I can hardly fathom the horror experienced by those who lost their loved ones to such a heinous act. I wholeheartedly agree that we need to take a collective step back and reflect on what led to this crime, including the cultural acceptance of violence, lack of mental health/social support services for individuals who are at risk for harm to self or others, and other proactive measures to prevent/reduce violence.

However, as a violence researcher and professor of victimology, I cannot help but question the effectiveness of these proposed bills, as they do not target the problem at hand. Instead, they place undue restrictions on legal gun owners. Violent perpetrators will take any means necessary to commit an act, and many already obtain firearms illegally. We must look at the systemic issue of violence and thwart the illegal means in which criminals obtain weapons. Also, if we improve our abilities to capture perpetrators at the beginning of their criminal careers, we are more likely to stop them before their behavior escalates to the level of homicide.

I recently applied for a pistol permit, and my husband also enjoys hunting and target shooting with rifles - many of which will be considered 'assault' rifles if the aforementioned bills are passed. Please consider the consequences these pieces of legislation will have on responsible, considerate citizens. Unfortunately, like poverty, this is a problem that is not easily solved by sweeping and reactive measures.

I thank the legislators for their time and consideration of my position.

Regards,  
Emily M. Meyer

Testimony submitted by:

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