

**TESTIMONY OF ERIC DONNELLY
GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION WORKING GROUP
MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2013**

My name is Eric Donnelly.

On February 2nd, 2005, my parents Tim and Kim Donnelly were murdered at their jewelry store in Fairfield CT. Their killer was a 23 year old heroin addict named Christopher Dimeo armed with a .40 caliber Heckler and Koch Semi-Automatic Pistol that he obtained in robbery a few months prior.

Not only have I personally lived through the tragedy of the crime, but also relived the events that lead up to this event in excruciating detail. A premeditated murder of two people, and murdering a spouse in front of one another, made Mr. Dimeo eligible for the death penalty. As with any death penalty case, there was a tremendous amount of debate and information about Chris's life and circumstances that was deliberated on for months in front of my family and I. In this testimony we relived the progression of a heroin addict who committed small robberies to feed his habit. In one of these robberies, he obtained the gun. This event quickly escalated the aggression and severity of his crimes. Graduating from small burglaries, to armed robberies, to the murder of three Jewelers, two of whom were my parents.

Chris Dimeo's ruse was well documented. He posed as a customer looking to buy an engagement ring. In the case of my parents, he specifically asked for my mother to try something on, so as to get them together. He then pulled the gun out of a bag. My father was shot four times in a matter of seconds. My mother shot 5 times seconds later. She was shot through her arms, her chest, and her back. As close up as point blank range. She was found in the fetal position with the telephone hung a few feet away under her body. Two people shot 9 times in a matter of seconds, with no chance to reason, escape, or defend themselves.

I am positive that obtaining this weapon empowered Chris Dimeo to commit the crimes that he did. I certainly understand that a crime of this nature has roots that go much deeper than guns. Mr. Dimeo, and many other people who battle substance abuse and other mental health issues need help. Eliminating weapons of this nature will not fix everything. But it will help prevent people from being able to inflict extreme harm on innocent unsuspecting people within a matter of seconds.

Thank you.