



## TOWN OF WOODBURY

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Written Testimony -  
Gun Violence Committee

I wish to prefix my testimony today with, *"It is not the gun that takes another person's life. It is the mental illness with the intent to harm that takes a life"*.

I testify here today not as to whether or not there should be gun controls, because there are those of who are here today who wish to provide that testimony.

I am here today to provide testimony and provide observation as the Chief Elected Official and also of that as the Chief of Police.

Since the tragic events of December 14, 2012, with the discussions of gun controls amongst politicians, the media and citizens alike, I have observed an increase in those wishing to acquire hand gun permits in our towns, in our state and across the nation at a rate that we have never bared witnessed to before in recorded history.  
As a Constitutional Right, in which I believe in, I swore to oath to defend these Rights.

Concerns of new guns ownership now entering our society is with that of gun safety. With new gun ownership, also comes a need for respect and a new responsibility. Gun safety is paramount.

A lingering question is, have we provided enough training?  
How many of those new guns will be safely and properly stored, locked away, and out of the reach and hands of an unsuspecting child?  
How many of those new guns will end up in the hands of those with mental illness, or those with criminal intent, or end up in the backpacks of our students in our schools?

These scenarios are frightening but real.

Not that long ago in Woodbury, one could hear the sound of church bells tolling time in the distance, or the sounds of parents and children from a far cheering aloud from an athletic field.

We now hear the sounds of gun fire from those who practice, in the surrounds of our hills. Perhaps we are a society of frightened, with the possibility of loss of rights. Perhaps we are frightened by those that we have elected, and to those who we look to, to protect us.

We need only to look to ourselves to find the answers. We need look at those in need, and to those with mental illness.

We can no longer look away as if it were not our problem.

*For it is not, how many shots that kill, but it is that, that one more shot that kills, is one too many.*

Thank you for allowing me to speak in these regards.  
And thank you for your efforts on our behalf.

Best wishes,

Gerald D. Stomski  
First Selectman  
Town of Woodbury