

Dear Elected Leaders,

Thank you for taking the time to focus on this most important issue facing Connecticut today. I know many of you have full time jobs and families aside from your duties as Senators and Representatives.

Before I add my thoughts to this debate I urge two things of you:

Do everything you can to make this discussion civil, constructive and inclusive of all views.

Do not let this issue fade away. Gun violence is an epidemic. We may not solve it today or this week or this year but please do not stop trying. If we can take even the smallest of steps now and build on those steps next year and the year following we may just end up with something that works and makes Connecticut a safer place.

I am a resident of Wilton, CT, a husband, a father of four and like most dad's I worry about my family every day. I raise them to respect others, respect themselves and their lives and respect the world and the gifts we are all given.

What I have seen in this debate is a lack of respect.

A lack of respect for the victims of gun violence.

A lack of respect for the families of those who have lost loved ones.

A lack of respect for common sense.

Guns are not evil and can serve a useful purpose in today's society but there is a lack of respect in this state and country for how deadly they can be.

Many gun owners I know do respect the power of a gun. They handle them with respect.

Unfortunately not all gun owners are that way which is why we need laws to protect everyone from those who do not respect the power of firearms. We need regulations for guns just as we do for:

Medicine - which saves lives just as guns can, but can be equally deadly. We don't allow just anyone to have access to all drugs all the time

Highway Safety - to get a license you have to prove you can drive safely and all cars on the road have to be registered

Dogs and Pets - I am required to have a license for my dog and I am legally forbidden from having a gorilla as a pet

I fully support CAGV's proposed legislation which through law forces those who own guns to respect them but I do want to add two additional points:

In banning high capacity magazines and more assault rifles we show a lack of respect to the law abiding gun owner. We need to add to this ban a buyback program so that gun owners are compensated for the newly banned weapons that were legally purchased. I know this is difficult to do given the current financial situation but we must find a way.

We need to strengthen laws against straw purchasers and rogue dealers and fund law enforcement and prosecutors so they can go after the sources of most illegal guns in this state and country. This too will

cost money but the cost of gun violence is much greater. We need to stop the flow of illegal guns into our urban centers now.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

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