

My name is Heather Whaley. I live in Redding, CT, and am the mother of two children ages 8 and 10. I am the proud daughter of a Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient who taught me not only to shoot a gun, but that proper training to use any weapon is vital. It is absolutely unacceptable that our children, as a matter of course, have lockdown drills and hide in their classrooms from would-be assassins. That is the price they must pay for the purported "right" of some to own whatever firearms they desire. That price is too high.

It is time we stop letting the fringe paranoid minority dictate what safe gun laws look like.

There are reasonable changes we must make that would have prevented the massacre in Newtown, and will help prevent the next one, and which do not infringe on the right to bear arms.

- 1) **Background checks on all gun purchases.** Background checks should include interviews with at least two references. Every responsible gun owner agrees this is a lawful and sensible change that needs to happen now.
- 2) **Limit the number of firearms that can be purchased at one time.** This would eliminate straw sales, driving up the cost of guns, making it much more difficult for criminals to procure weapons.
- 3) **Safe storage.** Offer a tax deduction for the purchase of a gun safe. Some argue that it would be impossible to enforce such a thing, but the insurance company makes sure you have a gated fence around your pool even though they can't ensure you leave it locked. **Owners of so-called "modern sporting rifles" MUST KEEP THEIR WEAPONS IN SAFE STORAGE AT A SHOOTING RANGE.** This should appeal to Second Amendment devotees because that's just what the well-regulated militia did – store their weapons in the town magazine.

4) **Require separate licenses for each class of firearm purchased.** As in the military, a training course should be completed before a license is issued. Such a training course should include safe handling and storage. A separate permit should be required for each class of firearm. For example, after completing a handgun-training course, you may buy a handgun, but would need to complete a different course to buy a sporting rifle. It is in the best interest of everybody if people know how to use their weapons. Proof of permit and license must be presented at the purchase of ammunition.

5) **Limit ammunition suitable to semi-automatic weapons to no more than seven rounds.** Imagine yourself on the wrong end of an AR-15, waiting for the shooter to stop and reload, so you could have a fair chance to run. There is nothing in the Constitution that guarantees the right to unlimited ammunition.

6) **Modern sporting rifles should hold no more than one characteristic in common with weapons used specifically for military purposes.** Assault weapons used in the military are designed for one purpose – to kill as many people in as short a time as possible. Some say the similarities between them and “modern sporting rifles” are merely cosmetic – but don’t tell that to the people who make those weapons. There is nothing “cosmetic” about an M4, Bushmaster, or AR-15. Every element of those weapons is thoughtfully designed to make it a more efficient and accurate killing machine.

I should not need to remind you that the only crime defined in the Constitution of the United States is treason—taking up arms against the government. Consider this very carefully when hearing testimony from those who claim the need to defend themselves from the government.

I am a mother. I am unarmed. I am not afraid of the NRA. I am certainly not afraid of the Connecticut Citizen’s Defense League. Nor should you be. We will be watching how you

personally vote on this issue. Will you be on the side of our children's rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, or will you be on the side of the NRA?