

Hello, my name is Jessica and I am a 38 year old mother of 3 from Simsbury. I personally, do not know of anyone that has been a victim of gun violence. I am writing this statement because I never want to.

When the Columbine shootings happened, I was 25 and had no children. I could not believe how easy it was in the US to get a gun and cause the senseless killings of all those people. Through the years, there have been more mass shootings. It seems like they are getting worse and happening more frequently, yet nothing seems to change. On December 14, 2012, I was rocked to my core, especially having children close to the age of the children that were murdered on that day. I felt so helpless because there was absolutely nothing that I could do to help the families of the children. During the recent hurricanes, I could donate money or volunteer time to help the people affected. In this case, there was nothing to do. If I could give a piece of my heart to the parents to help fill in the holes in theirs, I would have. The only thing that can be done to honor those 20 beautiful children and 6 brave educators is to do everything humanly possible to make sure this never happens again.

I vowed to myself that I would do anything that I can do to make the country a safer place. I also took the Sandy Hook Promise, promising that this time there will be change. While I realize guns aren't the only issue, it is definitely one of the issues and, in my opinion, the biggest one. I don't know how anyone can think that it makes sense that it is harder to adopt a puppy, get a driver's license or get Sudafed than it is to get a gun. I know people are using the 2nd amendment as their right to bear arms. I think that our forefathers are turning over in their graves knowing the words that they wrote, so many years ago, are preventing us from keeping our country safe. I'm sure they had no idea how guns could evolve and how they would later be used to hurt or kill so many innocent Americans. "Because it's my Second Amendment right" is no longer an acceptable excuse not to change gun laws. There is no reason that any civilian should need an assault rifle. The odds of someone getting hurt or killed by the gun you own is much higher than having a group of people intruding into your home, where you will luckily be able to take them all out with your high velocity assault rifle. It's simple statistics.

I am actually shocked that I am even writing this letter. I have never done anything like this. I am not a political person, I don't identify with any party. To me, this is not a political issue, it is a huge public safety issue. At first I thought, I am one person, what difference will it make. Then I thought, if everyone thought that way, then it guaranteed that nothing will change. I truly feel that if we can't do this now, after such an incomprehensible tragedy we will never do it.

I think of when I have spoken to my grandparents and they've told me that there was a time that women and blacks couldn't vote, that people had to wait in line for food and that no one knew that it was unhealthy to smoke when you were pregnant. I would say to them, "That's weird, I can't imagine the world that way, it doesn't make any sense." I hope when I speak to my grandchildren and tell them that at one time anyone could buy a gun, even an assault rifle that could kill many, many people in a short period of time, they will say to me, "That's weird, I can't imagine the world that way, it doesn't make any sense."

Lets do this now. I demand safer gun laws.

