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I am a law-abiding citizen, a responsible gun owner, a husband, a father, and a minister of the Church of Christ residing in Wallingford, Connecticut.

I am deeply grieved by the recent events in Newtown, Connecticut, but I'm opposing new restrictions on lawful and responsible gun owners. I must respectfully disagree with these proposed measures and believe that they are mistakenly misguided.

Consider the recent home invasion and murder in nearby Cheshire, CT (one town away from Wallingford). As a loving husband and father, I want to retain the ability to effectively protect my family against home invaders. There is no greater fear for a husband and father than the loss of his family. And I fear that some of you now support legislation limiting the number of bullets I can use in their defense. Others would restrict the capability and features of my firearm. Further gun legislation makes me feel considerably less safe, not more safe. When tragedy strikes, people naturally get scared and they want to feel safe. But additional laws cannot deliver the additional safety we all desire.

FBI statistics indicate that violent crime with firearms has declined since the Federal "assault weapons ban" expired in 2004. If the ban was working to reduce gun crime, why did gun crime not increase nationally after the ban expired?

As you know, Connecticut has had some of the most restrictive laws concerning rifles in the nation. However, these strict laws unfortunately did not stop the events in Newtown. We can continue to pass more laws, but criminals do not follow our laws. People that intend to commit violent criminal acts are not deterred by these laws. The people who suffer the most from these laws are not the criminals, but law abiding members of our state. Horrific acts committed by evil people do not justify stripping away rights of protection from the innocent.

I support further security for our children. I support the further enforcement of our current gun laws. I also support stricter punishment upon those who break our laws. But I ask you to please oppose all legislation that restricts protection and property of law-abiding families in Connecticut.

May God be with you and give you all wisdom and discernment during this important legislative session. May His will be done in all things in Heaven and on the earth and may His Kingdom continue to increase. Amen.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joseph Hamm  
Wallingford, CT