

Re: Gun Violence

TO: The Gun Violence Prevention Working Group

I regret that I will not be able to attend your meeting in person as I am out of state due to work obligations. I would however like to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important subject.

First I would like to state that it is slightly inappropriate to be legislating at this time due to the fact that we are still some time away from the official report on the Newtown atrocity. Those that have tried to rush legislation forward in the senate and house (Looney, Bye, Meyer ect.) without consideration have shown their true colors as being among those who wish to rule us rather than lead/serve us. I have no respect for that and quite frankly, this behavior leads to the very core of the Second Amendment's purpose. I am constantly reminded by world events why our founders made sure to give the Right to Bear Arms such a significant place in the Bill of Rights. World events such as Tiananmen Square, the Arab Spring, the Holocaust and many others serve as constant reminders that checks and balances on the power of government must remain in place. Similarly, local events such as the Cheshire home invasion remind us the self defense is a right given to us at birth. It is not given to us by the government and the government cannot take it away.

I am against any new laws and regulations on EQUIPMENT. Time and time again, we have seen that the types of firearms used do not have much if any impact on the outcomes of crime events. One only needs to examine the Virginia Tech shooting to realize that. No rifles were needed. That is because a rifle only gives you a large advantage at longer ranges... say beyond 25-50 meters. In the close confines of a building, a pistol is just as capable in many regards. Some think that if an AR15 type weapon was not used, that lives would have been saved. That is, quite frankly, nonsense. A dissertation on ballistics would take me many pages but if you remember one thing, remember this; a gun is a gun. They are all dangerous when in the wrong hands. I have one question to add to this paragraph. If rifles are so deadly and such a scourge upon our society, then why do they account for less than 4% of murders every year in the US when there are millions upon millions of them in private hands and twice as many people are murdered by mere fist and feet, according to the FBI? There is clearly something amiss in our thought process.

With regard to magazine capacity, I must say that I am consistently amazed by those who think they can reduce gun violence by reducing magazine capacity. Again, I will cite Va Tech. The madman just carried more magazines in addition to multiple firearms and reloaded a little more often. It only takes a few seconds at most and that is fairly inconsequential when you are shooting at unarmed/disarmed victims. Also, what makes you think that criminals who are hell bent on destruction will abide by these new laws that you pass? There are uncountable millions of magazines in the US today... hundreds of millions in fact. The only people who will be put at a disadvantage are the good citizens who just want to be left in peace and can end up at a disadvantage when facing multiple home invaders such as in the Cheshire home invasion case. This would also prove extraordinarily damaging to the Second Amendment when we consider its true intentions. Magazine bans are just another red herring.

## REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

I would suggest increased background check scrutiny with regard to criminal history and mental health history. To do that, information must be made available to those who are issuing permits and authorizations. That will probably mean a reduction in barriers with regard to health information and I realize that may present a slippery slope for some. We can use a small tax (not a spiteful, treasonous 50% tax) on firearms/ammo to help pay for these added measures. I think firearms owners everywhere would step up to the plate to support this. We want to see crime go down!

We should punish people who break the law more severely. I remember about a year ago, we had a guy who got caught in Milford with illegal drugs and an illegally possessed pistol. He was out on bail and walking the streets of my neighborhood again the next day! This is unacceptable. The same people who want to go easy on these criminals are the same ones who are asking us to hand in our firearms and magazines. My answer to them is a resounding no.

We must also make sure that people understand the importance of securing weapons properly. How do we do this? Not with laws that nobody knows about and many wouldn't follow even if they did. We must reach out to people's hearts and minds. I would suggest a partnership between the NRA, who has always been a major advocate of safe storage, and the government. Run commercials on major networks during shows like sporting events and nightly news that show the victims of violence and their families that have been affected by firearms that have fallen into the wrong hands. I think this will hit home with people in a way that laws never do. You need to give people a reason to WANT to act.

The same thing goes for the violence in our cities, where almost all gun crime happens and does so with illegally possessed pistols. People's minds and culture must change. I am, thank God, not part of that culture so I feel that it would be inappropriate for me to make many suggestions on fixing those problems. I will say though that we must be honest with ourselves regarding where these problems exist and who is causing them or we will never be able to solve those problems. The reality is this; simply having access to a gun does not make you want to go out and shoot somebody.

In conclusion, I hope that it is becoming apparent that knee-jerk, anti-Constitutional proposals such as guns that hold one bullet, 50% taxes, seven or ten round magazines, registration then confiscation and other such nonsense should not merit much consideration. If we focus our energy in the right places we can reduce crime significantly while still allowing people to exercise their rights and enjoying the many benefits that come with that.

Thank you,  
Joseph M. Loschiavo  
Naugatuck Ave.  
Milford, CT 06461