

To Whom It May Concern:

I find most of the current proposals concerning gun law reform to be unconstitutional and irrational. The wounds from the Sandy Hook tragedy are still recent, and many politicians are opportunistically seizing this moment to push their anti-gun consensus on the American people. Our politicians, as well as many citizens, are being led by a media frenzy in the context of mass shootings. It's no secret that bad news sells copies, and the way the media glorifies mass murderers with endless coverage proves that pockets are being lined with cash. This also seems to encourage troubled or malcontent individuals (both children and adults) to "raise the bar" as they see these people being idolized and strive for similar attention. The media should be broadcasting the facts victims and memorials not making stars of murderers. Although it is the public's right to have the knowledge I believe it should be kept in accordance to laws concerning open homicide investigations.

Carl Bernstein, himself a famous journalist, said this of modern American journalism: "[It is] the lowest form of popular culture -- lack of information, misinformation, and contempt for the truth or the reality of most people's lives -- has overrun real journalism. Today, ordinary Americans are being stuffed with garbage."

Many people who haven't ever previously thought about gun control are now offering up their opinions concerning the evils of "assault weapons." I support actions that would, in fact, target the problem. Ammo should be regulated, yes. No individual without a legitimate permit or weapon should have access to ammo. Gun owners should be required to have gun safes and trigger locks and receipts provided to the DPS. There should be more regulative measures for the purchase and sale of rifles and or long guns. Stricter punishment for individuals caught with illegal or stolen weapons. Legal weapons have never been the problem. The DPS knows where they are hence they are less likely to be used in violent crimes: As seen in recent times Adam Lanza was denied the sale of a semi automatic rifle three days prior to criminally obtaining weapons used in the shooting. This illustrates that the system in place works, and there is no accounting for the actions of criminals.

One would think that an opportunistic politician wouldn't purposely propose legislation that would place him or her in contempt in the public eye, and result in a potential failure for re-election. Yet that seems to be precisely what Diane Feinstein, Richard Blumenthal, and Daniel Malloy have done. Why aren't politicians touting the fact that violent crime has seen a noteworthy decrease in the United States in the last 20 years? The reason why is because acknowledging the violence decrease would make the current proposed legislation look like an attempt to disarm the American citizens. Secondly it appears to look like yet another reason to tax the already struggling "middle" class.

I propose that any revenue created in gun control policy should directly go to youth programs, school budgets, firearm safety, or mental health facilities. Being a member of the sport shooting community since age 18 where I joined the CMP (civilian marksmanship program) a federally funded organization to train civilians in both how to safely and accurately use a high powered rifle. Thought up and enacted by Theodore Roosevelt with the thought of a well organized militia in mind, a sort of last line of defense for our nation. I competed in the 2003 national matches at Camp Perry, Ohio (again most of this funded by the CPM) also while

competing the team went through a small arms firing school as well as a ballistics and windage class taught by the army marksmanship unit. The current gun bans being proposed will cost our state and Federal Governments unknown millions and most certainly lead to civil uprising. When this money could go to already failing control of illegal firearms, drugs, gangs and other organized criminal activities!

The other glaring problem that has been brought to full attention after this tragedy is the lack of mental health facilities, both state and federally funded. How should it be that a tired incarceration system should be required also to help those among us who have mental health problems? Even though these individuals may not yet be criminals, they can't receive help unless arrested or having caused some sort of disturbance. They don't get the treatment until they commit a crime. Unnoticed mental health issues, as we've just seen, can result in unimaginable tragedy. Not everyone who has a mental health issue will commit a crime; the point is that those individuals with mental disorders, regardless of their potential for criminal activity, need to be cared for in a way that the criminal justice system is currently not equipped to handle. Prisons are places for criminals, not the mentally disturbed.

There are many amendments in the constitution that are up for interpretation. The second amendment does not fall into this category. It was written clearly so that the citizenry of the United States can protect themselves from any tyrannical force that seeks to abuse its own rights in order to take away the rights of another individual. Until anti-gun politicians become clear in their intent, nothing that is uttered by them will be interpreted by gun owners as anything less than cliché anti-gun rhetoric.

Taking the measures proposed will not provide us with a solution to lowering violent crime or homicides. The proposed bans will inherently cause more problems as well as a new view of the public as a non threatening target to criminals. This would ultimately see a rise in violent crime as seen in the 1994 ban. These criminals will still possess these illegal weapons regardless of legislation while regular law abiding citizens are lumped into the criminal category for their hobby or pastime that is sport shooting. We should move forward with thought out logical actions rather than illogical rushed emotional responses.

Sincerely and thoughtfully,

Joseph P. DiMeo