

Committee members:

As a 56 year old law abiding citizen who has resided in Connecticut for my entire life I am concerned at the recent push to pass a series of gun control legislation as a reaction to the tragedy at Sandy Hook.

Some of these bills attempt to restrict an entire categories of firearms based on the misguided notion that if these objects did not exist bad people would not do bad things. Others of these bills attempt to do various things to make legally owning and using a firearm difficult.

I am opposed to all of the bills that propose to restrict the type of things that people currently own and have acquired in good faith based on the laws in force at the time.

I am opposed to any bills that propose to confiscate firearms, magazines or other property that is currently lawfully owned and that was acquired in accordance with the laws in effect at the time. This includes any forced buy-back programs or laws that would force owners to sell such property out of state.

Given that our state has limited resources and is currently struggling economically, laws that will create a large and costly process to try to do something that will probably not be effective are a misguided waste of important resources.

We need to keep in mind that the number of people killed in mass shootings (approximately 120 per year over the past ten years) is statistically insignificant compared to the number of people killed by traffic accidents, by drunk drivers, by drowning, or by medical errors.

According to the most recent F.B.I. statistics (2011) some 350 people were killed by people using rifles with the so called assault rifles being a subset of that. During that same period some 450 people were killed by people using blunt instruments such as baseball bats and some 750 people were killed by people who beat them to death with their bare hands or kicked them to death.

Please notice that I did not say "killed by rifles" but said "killed by people using rifles." The common thread here is that all of these people were killed by people not by objects.

Any new legislation should focus on the people who commit the crimes rather than focusing on classes of objects in a way that punishes the vast number of law abiding citizens without affecting those who do not obey the law at all. For example, how many of the criminals who currently own illegally acquired guns are likely to turn in their magazines if there is a forced buy-back?

State Representative Rob Sampson has introduced a package of bills that at first glance seem to be reasonable and focused on doing things that might actually help the problem. I support this type of legislation.

Thank you.

Joseph W. Hriczo of Bolton CT.