

Good Afternoon

Since the tragedy in Sandy Hook a little over a month ago, many elected officials have stated that the only reason to have "high" capacity magazines or "assault weapons" is "for criminal purposes." Am I being put in the same category as armed robbers and murderous gang members because I am in possession of a magazine capable of holding more an indiscriminate number of rounds, or a semiautomatic rifle that has certain features? Does the possession of these items show I possess criminal intent? The basis for this bill is founded in ignorance and directed by emotion, not logic and rational thought.

I hope the honorable members of the committee can see these bills for what they are – an imposition on the personal liberties of The People. I am the proud father of two beautiful children. I am a veteran of the Connecticut Army National Guard, and I am a valid Connecticut State Pistol Permit holder. I have the right to life, liberty, and property, and it is my duty to protect those basic fundamental rights.

I find it appalling that if any of the proposed bills pass, law-abiding gun owners may be forced to surrender their property, or face confiscation by the state police and a felony charge. Again, some of the proposed legislation would not only ban the sale of these magazines and firearms, but would make simple possession a felony. Any gun owner (including off-duty police officers and military members) found in possession of any magazine labeled as "high capacity" or a rifle labeled as an "assault weapon" will be in violation of these proposed laws, regardless of whether it was legally purchased. In the meantime, criminals will have the ability to travel a few hours in any direction, and legally purchase these magazines and rifles.

This proposed legislation will not protect citizens, nor reduce crime. Criminals by nature will have no concern for this law. FBI researcher Ed Davis published a study in 2006 on the Felonious Assaults on Law Enforcement Officers. Mr. Davis found that "the offenders laughed at firearms laws". This bill is a threat to the rights of law abiding citizens, and will tip the scales in the criminals' favor. Even if an individual with evil intent were limited to restricted round magazines, what prevents this monster from carrying multiple handguns? Three guns equal thirty rounds. No reloading necessary. There is nothing that can stop a monster intent on doing harm. An arbitrary limitation on the number of rounds in a magazine, or the outlawing of a particular rifle is not the answer to preventing gun violence. **CRIMINALS HAVE NO RESPECT FOR THE LAW.**

We are talking about restricting the rights of the majority due to the actions of the small minority. Clearly not the way the Founding Fathers intended for our country to be governed.

This proposed legislation will also affect non-gun owners as all Connecticut tax payers will be forced to foot the bill for the extraordinary process of having police confiscate - from law-abiding citizens - the millions of magazines and thousands of firearms already in the state. Making matters worse, manufacturers including Stag Arms, Colt, C Products, Mec-Gar, OKAY Industries, and Metalform will be directly affected by this legislation. That means a loss of jobs and tax revenue to the state.

Arbitrarily limiting magazine capacity, outlawing the ownership of Modern Sporting Rifles, and threatening law-abiding gun owners with confiscation and felony charges is beyond the pale. These magazines and firearms are utilized every day for home defense and the shooting sports. As part of the 1994 "Assault Weapons" ban, the production of higher capacity magazines was halted. This gun-control strategy soon proved to be a failure. A

comprehensive study by the Centers for Disease Control -- hardly a pro-gun entity - looked at the full panoply of gun-control measures, including this ban, and concluded that none could be proven to reduce crime. Another study, commissioned by Congress, found that bans were not effective since "the banned weapons and magazines were never used in more than a modest fraction of all gun murders."

Please listen to the voices of the people. The majority of the people in Connecticut are against this anti-gun legislation. The violence in Sandy Hook was a terrible tragedy. However, banning magazines and firearms, and the confiscation of personal property is a crime against the freedoms I served my country to protect.

Sincerely,

Joshua Ziel
Coventry, CT