

Hello members of this board and citizens of my home state of Connecticut. Today I address you as a veteran of the US Army, Operation Iraqi Freedom, as well as a deeply concerned citizen of this state. Before my service I took an Oath of Enlistment, where I swore to uphold the Constitution. I know that politicians, law enforcement and other public servants take a similar oath to uphold it as well, all the way up to the President. So nowhere in my mind can I make sense of the current attack on our bill of rights, because of the actions of criminals.

I served with soldiers overseas to try to bring freedom to a country that had none, just to come home to a country which has freedom, but is trying to whittle it away one right at a time. Maybe it has been so long since your rights were truly in jeopardy that you now take them for granted. How many of your relatives served this country protecting the same rights that I did? How many died protecting them? In no uncertain terms, I oppose every bill today with the objective of restricting firearms by make, model, type or capacity, any further than the current laws already cover. Frankly these proposed bills are an insult to those serving in the military to protect your rights. Anyone who took an oath to hold their current political office who is considering passing these bills must start taking their oath seriously, and realize that passing these proposals means dismantling the Bill of Rights.

On a separate note, many of these proposed laws are constructed simply to harrass law-abiding gun owners. Law makers have stated repeatedly that these laws will probably not stop crimes, but that they have to do something. In whose mind is it ok to take away something from law-abiding citizens for admittedly no reason? **Since when is this the approved standard by which we construct our laws?** The polls and studies show time and time again that "assault weapon" bans deter no crime, and that areas with the tightest gun control end up becoming safe havens for criminals. Connecticut is seeing an increase in the frequency of home invasions. To start limiting the law-abiding citizens will only roll out the welcome mat to more would be home invaders, giving them a safer work environment in which to commit their crimes.

Connecticut's current firearm laws work, Adam Lanza was turned down weeks prior to his shooting spree while trying to purchase an AR-15. But as he proved, when someone is willing to break the law to commit an act as horrible as Sandy Hook, there is no feel-good, knee-jerk, reactive law you can pass that will stop them. These laws will not remove guns from the hands of criminals, nor will they help anyone trying to protect their family or themselves from evil people.

President Obama said that if these laws save even 1 life, it justifies passing them. What about if they COST even one life? What if they leave law-abiding citizens insufficiently prepared against criminals, are they still worth it? Is it worth it to let an innocent family die, much like the Petit family did, all because you had to feel like you did something, no matter how foolish or counter-productive you knew it was? Giving criminals the upper hand against the law-abiding citizens is NEVER the answer.

Thank you for your time,
Sincerely
(Former SPC) Justin Hjulstrom