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I was angry after Monday's hearing- seeing the disrespect shown to a father who lost his son, I was angry at being called hysterical because I want common sense gun legislation, and I was angry that so many showed up to distort the Constitution; so I did what I do when I am angry, I wrote. I wrote a snarky statement to read tonight that wouldn't have advanced the dialogue, but sure would have felt good to say. Then, I read something, and rewrote what I want to say here tonight.

It was an opinion piece published on January 29th in the Washington Post written by two Newtown parents, Mark and Jackie Barden, entitled ***Make the debate over guns worthy of our son.***

So, to honor the memory of these children I want to ask us on both sides of the issue to work together towards a solution of gun violence. It means looking at all factors- schools, parents, video games, mental health, and, yes, even restrictions on the types of guns and ammunition that people may own.

We are here to ask you for common sense laws surrounding guns- registration of all weapons, strengthening the assault weapons ban, safe storage with criminal penalties, limiting ammunition to 7 capacity, a background check on all gun and ammunition purchases, nothing that will stop a law-abiding citizen from being able to hunt or have a gun in their home for protection. As Justice Scalia noted in *DC v Heller*- "Like most rights, the Second Amendment right is not unlimited... It is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose..."

We all have hobbies, for some in the room it's hunting or target shooting, one of my hobbies is running. I like to run on the trails in the open space in Ridgefield, but I choose not to do it during the months of the hunt so that no accidents can happen. It's learning to peacefully co-exist and be respectful of one another. I am not here to take away your ability to hunt, to target shoot, or to own a gun in your home if you believe that will keep you safer.

As Justice Scalia stated in *Heller*, the Second Amendment does not mean that you can own whatever weapons and ammunition you want. Quoting Scalia- "We do not cast doubt on concealed- weapons prohibitions, laws barring possession of firearms by felons

and the mentally ill, laws barring firearms in sensitive places like schools and government buildings, and laws imposing conditions on commercial sale of arms. Also, the sorts of weapons protected are the sorts of small arms that were lawfully possessed at home at the time of the Second Amendment's ratification, not those most useful in military service today..." See *Heller* at 54-55. The solutions will come from various areas, mental health, in our schools, with our parents and by partnering with those who legally obtain and use their weapons. Just as they have the right to legally own some weapons, I also have the right to be free from the mass carnage that some weapons and magazines can cause. I have the right to have my children be safe no matter where they are, whether they are at friends' houses, in school or at the movies.

After Columbine, nothing. After Virginia Tech, nothing. After Aurora, nothing. After Newtown, ___? It can't be nothing again. It's time to say enough. Let's work together to honor these lives that were taken far too early.