

I live here in Newtown, and have, on and off, for the past 20 years.

Like so many others, this is where we chose to raise our family, because here, in Newtown, the village really does raise a child.

And now there are 20 less children to watch grow up and that should never happen here. Or anywhere.

There is no way the right to a weapon of mass destruction in the hands of a unvetted gunman outweighs the right of a 6 year old to turn seven.

There is no way the right of to own an assault weapon outweighs a family's right to put kids on the bus in the morning, and fully expect their first graders to return at the end of the day, and not be gunned down by one very sick individual.

The right of a teacher to teach, and not become a combatant on the front line of unimaginable violence.

I am sad here in Newtown, trying to console my teenagers who taught these kids to swim, to console a husband who coached siblings of dead kids, and to smile and encourage friends who work in the schools, that it's all going to be alright. Because I'm not sure it is.

I'm not confident the power of you, the decision makers, will prevail, and not succumb to the power of the lobbyists and bully right to arms advocates who think the right to bear arms and protect themselves *in case* of attack, is more prevalent than the actual attack afflicting so many of our citizens. Our family and friends. Our world. My town.

I firmly believe, if pro-gun supporters attended just one of the funerals that I did; if they stood in line for hours upon hours and watched the heartbreak leave the funeral homes and churches and synagogues one by one, all ages, all sizes, they would realize that Daniels and James and Jessicas and Jesse and the 16 other tiniest victims, and the educators who tried to protect them, and the first responders who are forever broken, they would know *there is no inherent right that trumps this tragedy*.

This is not legislation on paper. This is not an abstract, difficult to grasp, multi-dimensional concept. Assault weapons are made to assault, and they did just that here in Newtown December 14th.

Only you have the power to make a difference, and this heartbroken Newtowner, sadly, does not.

I'm demanding more than this face-time, more than a green ribbon, more than a t-shirt or bragging rights that you "made a promise." I'm demanding you keep and use your Sandy Hook Promise to enact real, common sense gun laws – sooner and not later.

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We live together, us gun supporters and those of us who do not. We have a better chance of actually “living” if common sense laws are enacted so that responsible gun owners can remain responsible, and the rest of us can remain alive.