

Public Hearing Testimony from Kevin W. Fleming  
Please forward to :  
Full Bipartisan Task Force

Mental Health Services Working Group

Gun Violence Prevention Working Group

School Safety Working Group

Part 1

I am a retired Sergeant from the Vernon, CT Police Department with over 33 years of service. I was a full time Training Officer for 15 years and served 10 years with a regional SWAT Team, the last 6 as Team Leader. I was a CT POSTC certified instructor in firearms, shooting decisions, use of force, less lethal force options and numerous other subjects and was a lead instructor at the annual Capitol Region SWAT School. During my career I received many commendations and awards including Officer of the Year and the Medal of Valor. As you read this, please remember my background.

I taught Active Shooter Response to police officers for years and have studied many such incidents, including information not available to the public. The criminals who commit these crimes are cowards who target people they know to be defenseless. With rare exceptions, they don't barricade, don't take hostages and don't engage responding police officers; they commit suicide when they are aware that police are on the scene. Some people recoil in horror at the thought of armed police or security in schools. You need to know this: the only thing that stopped the Sandy Hook School incident, the only thing that EVER stops these incidents, is the intervention of the police or a legally armed person. When your deliberations are over, one fact will remain unchanged: one properly trained and equipped individual at Sandy Hook School, an armed police officer or security guard, could have ended this incident at the door. No innocent persons would have died and we would not be having this discussion. If you want to protect our schools, this is not only the MOST effective way; it is the ONLY effective way to do it.

The person responsible for these crimes, Adam Lanza, violated countless laws that day, none of which deterred him at all. Study after study in the US and other countries have concluded that increased regulation and banning of firearms does not deter violent crime. Criminals pay no attention whatsoever to gun laws. This is not only my conclusion but also that of the US Department of Justice in the following published studies:

- Killed in the Line of Duty: A Study of Selected Felonious Killings of Law Enforcement Officers, 1992
- In the Line of Fire: Violence Against Law Enforcement, A Study of Felonious Assaults on Law Enforcement Officers, 1997
- Violent Encounters: A Study of Felonious Assaults on Our Nation's Law Enforcement Officers, 2006.
- <http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/law-enforcement-bulletin/january-2010/the-fbi2019s-national-law-enforcement-safety-initiative>

Firearms ownership is already one of the most heavily regulated activities in the country. Across the Federal and State justice systems we already have thousands of laws regulating

firearms; laws which responsible citizens follow and criminals don't follow. Simply enacting more laws that will restrict law abiding gun owners and have no effect on criminals is not an answer.

Kevin W. Fleming