

Dear Members of the Gun Violence Sub-Committee:

I implore you to take immediate action to implement stringent gun control measures in Connecticut. I have four grandchildren, two of whom are 6-year-old first graders. On December 17, the Monday after the Newtown massacre, I read to one of their classes at Washington Primary School in Washington, CT. It was deeply upsetting to see the innocent, trusting, and fragile human beings gathered around me, children just like those who had been gunned down at Sandy Hook Elementary School just three days before. These children, along with all children in the U.S., should not have to grow up in a country where gun ownership and gun violence are out of control. Let's face it—the U.S. is a dangerous place to live, for children and adults, alike, where a visit to a school, theater, mall, church or mosque—anywhere—could result in death or maiming due to guns. It is time to ban the guns that are used in these horrific shootouts—please find the courage to act NOW!

I support the legislative agenda of Connecticut Against Gun Violence (CAGV), which includes along with other important provisions, such as required permits and background checks, a strengthening of the ban on assault-type weapons, like the Bushmaster AR-15 used in the Newtown massacre, and high-capacity handguns, such as the Glock and Sig Sauer, also present in Newtown. I also support a ban on high capacity ammunition magazines. Further, I strongly urge you to to enact a gun buy-back or mandated gun turn-in program. It is critical to contain the millions of assault-type weapons that will still be owned and available for use after the ban is implemented.

Besides the real menace of assault-type weapons so prevalent in our society, these weapons have a dangerous glamor attached to them when replicated in toys. I recently visited a Connecticut bike shop where a Santa Cruz skateboard in the shape of an AK-47 was being tested out by a young boy. (The board had a warning that if carried improperly, it could be mistaken for a real weapon and a danger to the user!) An assault weapons ban would have the effect of diminishing the fascination of such 'toys' for our children and, over time, eliminating a gun culture inimical to the fabric of our society.

Sincerely,

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