

Dear Task Force of Gun Violence Prevention and Child Safety,

I am a resident of Connecticut, a voter and a public school teacher. As a parent and educator, I was deeply saddened by the senseless tragedy that occurred in Newtown. I believe that more should be done to prevent the mentally ill from committing these acts. I am also a law abiding licensed gun owner who strongly believes in my Second Amendment rights to protect myself and my family.

I urge you to use common sense when proposing new restrictions. I feel that the recent laws enacted by New York is unjustly punishing law abiding citizens for the acts of a few. I do agree with Universal background checks and elimination of gun show loopholes. As an owner of an AR15, I do not feel that they should be banned. The AR 15 is one of the most popular models for target shooting and contrary to what some misinformed individuals have said, it is used for self defense. My father, a Marine Corp Veteran, has spent time with me on the gun range firing the AR15 , as well as a restored M1. He has taught me the importance of being a responsible gun owner. Lessons learned from him have stayed with me through the years. I think it is unfair to categorize gun owners as being irresponsible. I also feel that it is unjust to try to take away a legal forearm that I have paid well over \$1,000 for and not be reimbursed for it. If a young teen crashed into a crowd of people with a BMW, would it be fair to create a law to confiscate all BMW's because one mentally challenged individual broke the law and was violent?

I also would like to know why there is a need to have armed security personnel at the capital building and not in an elementary school? Seems to me more shootings have taken place in schools than in the legislature. Are our kids not as important as congressmen? I find it interesting that the answer to politicians personal security is a loaded gun, but not for the schools. I believe your task force must look closely at the issue of "Gun Free Zones". I feel that it is a open invitation for a sick individual to do as much damage in the greatest amount of time before being stopped by police or another individual with a gun. Lock down drills, buzzers and sign in sheets in the main office of a school does not realistically prevent the violence that befell Newtown back in December.

As for measures that may make a difference. I do believe that a thorough background check should be performed. I believe that one should obtain a pistol permit to also obtain a rifle. I also believe that the gun show loophole should be addressed (however, I believe many of the weapons used in mass shootings were not from gun shows).

I feel a 10 round magazine limit would be fair. I do not agree with New York's ban of magazines more that 7 rounds. As you know, most pistols hold more than 7 rounds. That will force gun owners to buy larger caliber (more powerful) pistols that hold fewer rounds due to space in the magazine.

I want you to know that this is more of a "People control" issue than a gun control issue. As a teacher, I see daily how many children mirror society's problems. I feel that we as educators need to stop focusing so much on test scores and numbers and more on the

individual child. In my 25 years of teaching, I have seen a greater need for children to learn to get along, develop a respect for adults and fellow classmates and learn self control. Unfortunately , the trend in education has made it nearly impossible for educators to address this issue. If you want to solve the problems of violence you need to focus on people, not on guns.

Please use common sense and reasoning rather than emotion, hysterics and knee jerk reactions to address these complex issues.

I would be more than happy to discuss the issue further with anyone on the committee.

Sincerely,
Mark Battista

57 Hansen Farm Rd.

North Haven, CT 06473