

Mark Capaldo

Wolcott, CT

January 25, 2013

Attn: Gun Violence Prevention Working Group

Committee Chairs and Members:

I am planning to attend the January 28, 2013 working group public hearing. As required, I respectfully submit for consideration my testimony.

I am the father of a 7-year-old daughter, and felt the same powerful emotions as all of you as I heard of the horrific events in Newtown. However, as is your duty as legislators to understand, emotion and inflamed passions should be absent from any rational discussion or debate with regard to proposed legislation.

I am a law-abiding citizen and responsible gun owner. I recognize that with rights come responsibilities, and take that responsibility very seriously. Self-defense is the responsibility of an individual alone, not law enforcement. In the unfortunate event that I am required to use force to defend myself and/or my family against threat of violence, I have both the desire and the right to have the best tools available in order to do so. The same tools employed by law enforcement should be available to me as a law-abiding citizen, as I am vulnerable to the same violent criminal elements as they are.

It seems that we quickly forget another horrific crime that occurred here in Cheshire, CT. I am left wondering whether (regardless of his stated position), Dr. Petit wishes he were better prepared to defend himself and his family against the evil that visited him that fateful evening.

I am frankly disgusted by the zeal with which “gun control” advocates and legislators in other states seek to punish and demonize those of us

who have respect for the law and choose to avail ourselves of our natural and Constitutional rights to self-defense. I would ask that you not follow their overzealous lead, having heard statements made to the effect that CT “should have THE strictest laws”. This is a race to the bottom, and will do far more harm than good.

Prior to passing any new, or modifying existing legislation perhaps more should be done to enforce the more than 20,000 State and Federal firearms laws already on the books.

I am vehemently opposed to the recommendations being made by CAGW, as well as most of the currently proposed legislation I have read – specifically, but not limited to:

HB-5112: An Act Concerning the disclosure of the names and address of persons holding handgun permits.

HB-5268: An act requiring the maintenance of liability insurance by firearm owners and establishing a sales tax on ammunition.

SB-1: An act concerning the protection of children, families and other individuals from violence.

SB-21: An act authorizing bonds of the State for an eternal light in memory of victims of gun violence.

SB-122: An act concerning restrictions on gun use. SB-124: An act banning large capacity ammunition magazines.

SB-140: An act concerning liability insurance for firearm owners and sales tax on ammunition.

Other bills are in committee that I believe are examples of truly “common-sense” measures. These bills would support the law-abiding citizens of this State while reinforcing penalties for offenders.

HB-5165: An act concerning the defense of a person's home, motor vehicle or business.

HB-5176: An act concerning the application requirements for a temporary State permit to carry a pistol or revolver.

HB-5179: An act concerning access to the interactive voice response system of the Special Licensing and firearms Unit of the Division of State Police.

HB-5269: An act increasing the penalty for criminal use of a firearm or electronic defense weapon.

Not only does the Second Amendment of the Bill of Rights guarantee an individual the right to keep and bear arms, so does our very own State Constitution, Article 1, SEC. 15 which reads as follows: “Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state.” This individual right has been reinforced by recent Supreme Court cases as well. The laws you are proposing, such as ammunition capacity limits are directly in contravention of this right. They are often arbitrary and capricious, and are clearly rooted in emotion rather than informed knowledge.

There are many alternatives that can help to prevent a recurrence of the tragedies we have all witnessed. These include opening up NICS to the public, improvements to the mental health system, and renewed approaches to school security. I urge you to educate yourselves and keep an open mind when reviewing all these proposals and remain ever vigilant of the duty you swore to uphold our constitutional rights.

Respectfully,

Mark Capaldo