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I am a Fire Commissioner, a Member of my Volunteer Fire Dept., and a certified EMR in my local ambulance corps; *911* calls *me*. As a first responder, I take public safety matters very seriously. I am also a professional firearms safety educator, certified by the NRA and the Massachusetts State Police to teach gun safety. I find it ironic that many of the proposals in front of you come from those who, in the name of so-called "gun safety," are seeking to confuse people into supporting bans on certain firearms. None of what they are doing, including their smears of law-abiding gun owners, will do a thing to promote safety. Many of them have been waiting for decades for a perfect storm like Newtown to exploit and politicize, and they have pounced eagerly on this tragedy as a golden opportunity to push victim disarmament.

They say that nobody "*needs*" so-called "assault weapons" (which is nothing but a political label). What is the difference between the ranch rifle in the top photo and the so-called "assault weapon" below it? *Perception*. These two guns are identical, both semi-automatic, which means they fire one bullet each time the trigger is squeezed. They are actually the same rifle, wearing different clothing. The one on the bottom is more menacing looking, and that's what bans on so-called "military style" guns are all about: *style*. Labels. Perception. And it is deception. Banning a gun because of what it looks like will not make anyone safer. What nobody *needs* is new bans on perfectly normal, common and typical guns, in fact the most popular gun in America. And this, in the hands of a law-abiding citizen, is a highly useful *defense* weapon.



That's just one of the many attempts to try to turn law abiding citizens into criminals with the stroke of a pen. Another is the frighteningly absurd single-round bill (#122), which would make almost every gun manufactured in the last 150 years illegal, to say nothing of putting every Connecticut gun manufacturer out of business. Over 60% of all gun deaths are suicide; such a person might find one of the remaining legal guns adequate; but a gun that can hold only one bullet is useless for most practical purposes. And we are looking at dozens more proposed bills that attempt to disarm law-abiding citizens!

It was a 1996 school shooting in Dunblane, Scotland that prompted the British to enact total gun confiscation (which was made easier by first requiring all firearms to be registered with the government, so they knew exactly who had what). After that, violent crime skyrocketed, their violent crime rate is far above that of the United States, and the country has earned the title of violent crime capital of Europe. Draconian gun control hasn't worked over there, and it won't work here. We need to enforce the 20,000+ laws already on the books, not enact new laws that will punish law abiding citizens for the crimes of a few.