

I am writing this letter in opposition to any and all new legislation regarding "assault rifles" and high capacity magazines.

I am a police officer in a high crime city in CT. I respond to some type of gun related call on a weekly basis, and see gun violence regularly. I can tell you that any further legislation will have little to no effect on criminals illegally using guns to do their crimes. No criminal is going to follow these laws, and they will still obtain high capacity magazines the way they do now, which is through the black market. The only thing such legislation will accomplish is disarming private law-abiding citizens of their protection.

Proposals limiting magazine capacity would limit the ability of citizens to defend themselves from criminals. One cannot solely rely on the police to protect them, as no matter what the police response time is, seconds count between life and death. Most calls that police respond to are ones where the crime has already occurred, and the police arrive to clean up the aftermath. We process the scene, possibly arrest an offender, and process evidence to be used in future prosecution. But the violence has already occurred. It is rare that police arrive in time to stop a crime from occurring.

Not only would further legislation hinder citizen's ability to protect themselves, but you would be making common citizens felons, as many would rather risk prosecution for their high capacity magazines than surrender them. As the saying goes "Better to be judged by twelve than carried by six." When one is facing a threat, the more bullets you have, the better your chances are of stopping that threat. I have seen plenty of people get shot 5 times and live, and I've read plenty of case studies where a criminal was still a threat until the fifth or sixth round brought them down. Also, many violent acts are perpetrated by more than one person. Case in point the Cheshire home invasion. Sen. Meyer proposed a one bullet limit on guns. This is sheer foolishness. Limiting bullets in magazines is the true threat to public safety, not the other way around.

As an officer, I consider private gun owners as allies, and my backup. I have no fears of legal owners possessing "assault rifles" or high capacity magazines.

A gun is an inanimate object. It can be used for good or evil, depending on who's hands it is in. But the gun itself is not the problem, and it is not the problem in our society today where tragedies like Newtown occur. There are many things that we can blame violence on, but guns are not one of them. We don't have a gun problem in America today, we have a violence problem. Instead of considering guns as the cause, I would look to numerous other areas such as mental health, the break-down of the traditional family, a lack of parenting, the culture of violence in the inner city, the glorification of violence in hollywood and the music industry, and violent video games where our children are allowed to realistically simulate horrible acts every day from the comfort of their own homes. Look up Lt. Col. Dave Grossman's analysis of the problem of violent influence on our children. It is spot on. [http://www.killology.org/article\\_teachkid.htm](http://www.killology.org/article_teachkid.htm)

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro recently called assault weapons dangerous. I can agree with her, that they are dangerous. So are many things in this life, but we don't demonize them all the same way that the politicians now are demonizing assault rifles. For example, fire is dangerous, but it can also save life. Consider the following: "National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA's) annual

fire department experience survey, NFPA estimates that candles were the heat source in an estimated average of 12,860 reported home fires annually during 2005-2009. These fires caused an average of 136 civilian deaths, 1,041 civilian injuries and \$471 million in direct property damage per year." <http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/pdf/candlesexecutive.pdf> Yet no one is crying for the banning of lighting candles in one's home.

Another example of a dangerous object is the hammer. FBI statistics from 2005 to 2009 show that more people were killed with a hammer or other blunt object than were killed with rifles. [http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2009/offenses/expanded\\_information/data/shrtable\\_08.html](http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2009/offenses/expanded_information/data/shrtable_08.html) No one would call for the banning of hammers, because they are a necessary tool in our daily life. However, they have consistently killed more people than even the dreaded "assault rifle." The FBI statistics also shows a high level of handgun violence. But I can assure you that number is so high because of inner city gang violence associated with the illegal drug trade, and that number would in no way be effected by further legislation.

One final example of a dangerous item is the Bible. Now I am a Bible-believing Christian and my faith is in God, but I cannot deny that many horrible acts have been committed throughout history and were perpetuated by evil people misusing the Bible. Consider the Inquisition, witch hunts, slavery, and the crusades. In the movie "The Book of Eli" the main villain, in reference to the Bible, cried "It's not a book! It's a weapon!" However, that does not make the Bible in of itself dangerous. It is a good book that has been used for good and evil. But no one would propose to ban the Bible because of the evil acts of men.

There many, many other arguments regarding the support of private citizens being armed with "assault rifles", but I will allow those arguments to be made by someone else. I can tell you that as a police officer, I agree whole-heartedly with every argument I have ever heard in favor of citizens owning "assault rifles." I believe they are protected by the U.S. Constitution, and I can attest that most police officers stand with me in my beliefs expressed here.

The laws that we have currently in place are sufficient to do their intended purpose. If anything should be proposed, it should be the allocation of more resources to enforce the current laws. I would also suggest mandatory minimum sentencing for criminals convicted of gun crimes.

Finally, I will close with the following thought: Some would say that as a police officer, I should not be concerned with these proposed laws as they will not apply to me because I am law enforcement. However, every night my wife sleeps home alone with my three children while I go off to work on the midnight shift. I leave her every night with the comfort knowing that she is protected by her handgun with her high capacity magazine should the sanctity of my home be violated by an intruder. Please do not pass any further legislation.

Sincerely,

Ofc. Michael Luckingham

"People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf..." George Orwell