

Dear Gun Violence Prevention Committee Members,

In the wake of the Sandy Hook tragedy, we residents of CT look to our politicians to enact effective solutions to keep all of our kids safe.

Please support measures that would prevent those who have a history of mental illness from being able to purchase firearms in the state of CT. There has to be a better way for background checks to determine who should not own a firearm. I don't think there is any shame in admitting that our current system is not perfect.

With that being said, CT already has the some of the strongest gun laws in the country (ranked 5th by the Brady Campaign). Many of the proposed solutions would not have prevented the Sandy Hook massacre, nor would it have curtailed the number of casualties. Registration, magazine capacity limitations and so called "assault weapons" bans do not even chip away at the root of the problem. Instead they would turn tens of thousands of currently law abiding CT residents into criminals. With regard to magazines in particular, it takes a mere two seconds to change a magazine - it doesn't matter if that magazine holds 5, 7, 10 or 20 rounds. Also, those people who would commit such heinous crimes have already in their minds chosen to ignore existing laws regarding murder. More gun control laws would simply drive a larger black market, where anything could be bought without a background check, just like the underground trade of illegal drugs. I fear any further restrictions on the types of guns and magazines that can be bought would backfire for this reason.

In particular, the specific bills that I am opposed to are: H.B. #5647, SB #124, SB #504 (all concerning magazine capacity) and SB #501 (concerning assault weapons ban). I am not a hunter or competitive shooter, but rather hobbyist who restores old WWI and WWII rifles to working condition. However, I respect the every type of gun enthusiast and citizen who relies on the gun of their choice for defense of their person or family, whether that gun is a pump shotgun, pistol or semi-automatic rifle.

I have heard it repeated that assault weapons and high capacity magazines are not well suited for defense but it really depends on a person's living situation. I would never select any type of rifle for self defense in an apartment building because the rounds can penetrate many layers of drywall (instead a shotgun or handgun would be the best option); however, a rifle would be the best gun to choose in a more rural area where accuracy might be the difference between a coyote getting close enough killing your pet or not. A semi-automatic rifle would be perfect for that type of situation, whereas a typical shotgun or handgun would lose accuracy at long distance.

We as concerned CT residents are counting on your committee to identify and recommend real, effective solutions. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at the number in my signature. I would be very much willing to elaborate on my experiences as a gun owner and restorer.

Sincerely,

Michael Martin

Stamford, CT  
(c) 203-918-6164