

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a law-abiding citizen, a hunter, a firearms instructor, a range safety officer, a certified gunsmith, a competitive shooter, and a responsible gun owner. I was taught at a young age proper firearms safety. I continue to take pride in teaching, promoting, & applying all aspects of firearms safety. I am extremely saddened by the tragic events that unfolded in Newtown, Connecticut. I believe that efforts to impose more restrictions on myself and other lawful and responsible firearms owners like me will not be beneficial. I am strongly opposed to any new gun control legislation that has come about due to the tragic events that recently took place at the Sandy Hook Elementary School. While I grieve for all of us affected, and wish that such a horrific tragedy never **ever** happen again, I also realize that attacking the Constitutional rights of law abiding citizens is not at all the proper corrective measure to take. Every facet of what happened that day was already covered under existing Connecticut & Federal laws. **It is extremely important that you understand that this crime was committed by an unstable person in a state where we still have an Assault Weapons Ban in place. Connecticut currently has some of the strictest firearms laws in the nation in regards to gun ownership. (Connecticut is listed as fourth).** There are no voids in the existing laws. The real shortcomings are found in our state's mental health fields, services, & policies. Please focus more on strengthening our mental health care and improving the quality of data supporting NICS checks (National Instant Criminal Background Check System). There are currently over 20,000 firearms laws. Please, work to enforce the existing laws & please DO NOT pass more firearms laws! These newly proposed bills will make myself, my family, my friends & other law-abiding citizens instant criminals. Please do not let your emotions cause you to punish the thousands of law-abiding citizens of this state. Please think about these newly proposed laws with reason, not emotion.

According to the 2011 FBI Stats firearms related deaths have actually decreased massively over the last 20 years. The fact is that more people were actually killed with blunt objects, and even hands, fists, or feet than with rifles. In the state of Connecticut a rifle was only used once to commit a violent act in 2011. Please verify these facts at the FBI website listed below.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2011/crime-in-the-u.s.-2011/tables/expanded-homicide-data-table-8>

I ask that you please redirect your energies in addressing the real cause of the problem.

Respectfully,

Michael Semeraro

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