

To the members of the groups ,

I thank you for being a part of the solution to an ever growing problem in our country . I am also glad that our Govt. realizes that the tragic incident in Newtown was the result of several deficiencies within our society .

To curb gun violence we need education in our schools about what is seen in games and on tv ,by our youth . Guns and bullets have real consequences when not used in a responsible manner . Video games and tv shows glorify shooting people . Real efforts have to be made to teach reality versus fantasy and how to deal with life's ups and downs .

Considering the number of firearms already in the hands of millions of Americans ,banning certain types of firearms ,limiting magazine capacity and the amount of rounds allowed to be in the firearm at one time ,will do nothing to curb gun violence . Someone contemplating using a gun to do harm to innocent people has already discounted abiding by any laws. They will find a way to carry out their twisted plot no matter what the law says about magazine capacity or gun type . The obvious thing is to have background checks and minimum age requirements in order to purchase a firearm .Registration of every firearm sold should have been done along time ago,again something that was only required for handguns. This has always been the case for handguns,but not so for other firearms (rifles,shotguns) .Private sales of firearms should be prohibited,unless a background check was done on the buyer,prior to the sale . This can be done through the State Police Public Safety dept. or a licensed FFL dealer. Also, a gun safety training course completion is something that should be required ,prior to purchase . This should weed out someone buying a firearm to commit a crime ,although not foolproof , as we have seen many of these mass shooters have planned their actions over a long period of time .

This is where mental health services come into play . Starting at the middle school level and into college ,teachers and counselors should have access to training to identify potentially dangerous students.

Psychologists should be available ,if not on campus ,to evaluate identified individuals . Their findings should be made available to school administrators who can then meet with teachers and counselors who have knowledge of the student and come to a group decision on whether or not there is a legitimate threat . The Newtown and Aurora shootings were committed by someone who slipped through the cracks . We need a fair and honest way to identify and track people who exhibit anti-social behavior at school ,while protecting their personal info and rights . Psychological records of those who have made threats or committed crimes like these should be made public and be shared with the FBI, whether the perpetrator is living or dead. This would help shed some light on what makes someone go to this extreme form of violence and keep someone from getting a firearm when they try to buy one .

School safety today is something that means much more than non slip surfaces on ramps and stairs. The current state of our society requires having teachers trained to handle violent students . They should be trained like police officers are,to spot potential problems and look for things that may indicate someone is about to commit a crime or is carrying a gun . Security has to be more than a Police car parked outside the school . Surveillance cameras are a good deterrent ,but if they are not being monitored ,they may only capture the crime and not have someone see it about to happen and possibly stop it or save lives .Bullet proof glass may seem extreme ,but an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This glass can be placed at 1st floor windows,entrances and the main office . Since nonone can say when a threat will come ,you

have to always be prepared . Bollards at front entrances and in front of the school buildings where a vehicle could potentially be driven into the building would be in addition to increased security personnel.

I realize that some of these solutions and ideas seem a little beyond what was usually found in schools . I remember when I was in High school ,the doors were never locked and you could come and go until the janitors left at night . There were no thoughts of violence like we have seen recently.School was always a safe place for kids to learn ,grow and play . The times have changed and we must change with them . Hopefully ,this is only a temporary departure from civility and our schools will be safe again . It's a different world,it has been since 9/11.We look at malls,theatres,stadiums,office buildings and now schools in a whole new way ..

Sincerely ,
Michael Snyder