

I am a firearms instructor certified by the National Rifle Association and other organizations. I instruct men, women and children throughout Connecticut in rifle marksmanship. As a firearms instructor, I am a gun safety advocate. Gun safety begins with the rules of firearms safety. Treat every firearm as loaded at all times, never point a firearm at anything you are not willing to destroy, keep your finger off the trigger until you are on the target, and make sure others follow the rules of firearms safety. If any member of either the Working Group or either the Senate or House of Representatives would like to learn gun safety, I will provide free instruction, and I know most of the firearms instructors in Connecticut will do the same.

Proposed restrictions limiting the capacity of magazines, prohibiting certain common semi-automatic firearms, prohibiting certain types of ammunition, limiting the amount of ammunition, and requiring gun owners to have insurance are unconstitutional and contrary to the principles upon which this state was formed and our nation was founded. People “are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, ... among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” U.S. Declaration of Independence, Paragraph 2 (1776). Unalienable rights are “impossible to take away or give up.” Merriam-Webster.com, Retrieved Jan. 24, 2013, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/unalienable>. The right to self-defense cannot be questioned. “Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state.” Connecticut Const. art. I, § 15. “The right of self-defense is the first law of nature..., and when the right of the people to keep and bear arms is, under any color or pretext whatsoever, prohibited, liberty, if not already annihilated, is on the brink of destruction.” William Blackstone, Blackstone's Commentaries, ed. St. George Tucker, 5 vols. (Philadelphia: William Young Birch, and Abraham Small, 1803; reprint ed., South Hackensack, NJ: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), 4:3. Restrictions that limit the capability of law-abiding citizens to defend themselves, violate our constitutional principles and, consequently, merit no consideration.

Moreover, the proposed restrictions are discriminatory and will have their greatest impact on the poor, weak, infirm and otherwise disabled. Proposed taxes and requirements for insurance would discriminate against the poor and others who struggle financially. Disarming law-abiding would allow the strong to prey upon the weak. When a person properly armed and trained becomes a formidable opponent regardless of physical limitations. The proposed restrictions should be rejected as discriminatory and unfair.

Also, it makes no sense to bring the weakest members of our society into any area where no one is prepared to protect them. Gun free zones create areas that allow the evil and insane to prey upon those needing protection. If any policy should be adopted in this state, we should permit teachers to be armed in our schools. I know a number of instructors that would readily volunteer to provide free instruction to teachers.

Those who wish to restrict the rights of others to own and use firearms refer to “common-sense” gun laws. Nothing they seek to promote is supported by common sense. Please reject any new restrictions.

Thank You.

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