

Dear members of the Violence Prevention Workgroup,

I write to you today as a state of Connecticut tax payer, a city of Bridgeport homeowner, a husband and a father. I am not a gun enthusiast or a hunter. My view stems from my primal instinct to protect my family and loved ones. As a community we all have a duty to protect one another but many feel this is either not their responsibility or lack the character to put themselves at risk to help another. The time when violence was something that was read about in a city or town far away have long passed. Vigilance for the day it comes knocking at our door, or at our neighbors' door for that matter is the only way to ensure safety.

The law proposed would affect my ability to both educate and protect my family and loved ones in an effective manner. There is no legislation that could have prevented the recent tragedy or those before it. However, this new legislation will send a clear message to the lawless that would use this to their advantage. The message being that good citizens of this state are now much more at a disadvantage thus further increasing the workload of those sworn to help and protect us. The failings of the recent tragedy do not fall on the inanimate objects used to carry them out, but on those closest to the individual that chose to ignore the signs of instability. It is a fact that if one intends to do harm, they would use any ordinary means necessary to do so. We do not blame cars for car accidents or gravity for plane crashes, at the heart of this matter is people. These changes to an already strict list of laws that have been adhered to by law abiding citizens will only penalize the people that it is trying to protect.

I cannot imagine the pain of losing a child, but even more so I could not imagine losing a child in a situation where I once had the means to protect them, but no longer do.

Michael Villarnovo

80 Astoria Avenue

Bridgeport, CT 06604