

My name is Michelle Levinson. I live in Wilton Ct. I, like every mother here would do anything to protect my babies. Sadly, there is only so much I can do with respect to protecting my children against gun violence. My testimony tonight is on behalf of many parents, friends and family members who were unable to be here tonight who if here would be here to DEMAND common sense gun laws to protect ALL of our CHILDREN as well as to honor the 26 beautiful lives of those innocent children and courageous adults who became victims of a “matrix of breakdowns” in our society with regards to gun regulations and the mental health care system.

In response to those who oppose gun regulations- Yes, you have the right to own guns for sport and hunting and yes you do have the right to protect yourself but RIGHTS demand RESPONSIBILITIES and REGULATIONS. PERIOD.

These Regulations MUST be as follows- COMPREHENSIVE background checks. This MUST include closing the gun show loopholes where some 40% of gun sales are made without background checks. The INSANITY of this loophole truly defies logic and shame on us for allowing this to occur for so long.

There must be a Ban on all Assault Weapons. They have NO place in a civilized society. These are meant for combat

like situations NOT homes, schools, movie theaters outside of grocery stores etc. These weapons are ONLY meant for the battlefield and a public safety environment ONLY to be used by law enforcement. These killing machines are an ASSAULT on our right to be safe in public places.

There MUST be a Ban on high capacity magazines- in Mark Kelly's testimony in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee this morning he stated that if the Tucson shooter had a smaller clip the 9 year old little girl who was shot with the 11th bullet would be alive today. The Aurora shooter had a 100 round clip with the EXPLICIT INTENTION of killing as many people possible. There is NO LOGICAL REASONING that these high capacity magazines should be in the hands of any gun owner Period.

With the sheer amount of guns that exist in this country without these proposed regulations there is a gross public safety threat to everyone including our innocent children who RELY on us to PROTECT them. Their psyche following the Newtown tragedy as well as every adults psyche cannot absorb the cost of another senseless act of mass murder.

As parents we teach our children to learn from their mistakes- as a society we paid the pricesadly, some paid the ultimate price of previous flawed gun laws. So, now we must reexamine rewrite and redo what we failed to before.

Just like these gun issues are complicated life is complicated. We will never be able to completely rid the world of horrific acts of violence- BUT we sure as hell can do everything in our power to minimize/limit the opportunity for yet another tragedy. Yes it's just one step closer in the right direction facing this issue as well as mental health -all these issues we've neglected far too long. This will be a long road but trust me we MOTHERS will never back down on this issue.

So a few nights following the Sandy Hook tragedy i told my 8 year old daughter that all the adults in her life will do everything humanly possible to make sure this wont happen again will you please do EVERYTHING in your legislative power to PROTECT her and all of our children.

We talk a lot about how to honor the victims. We wear ribbons. We wear T-shirts. We pray and we say we will never forget. But what do we call honor absent of action? We call it illusion. And the illusion of honor is nothing short a of betrayal. A betrayal to the victims. A betrayal to all the future victims. And a betrayal to those late night reassurances between a mother and daughter, when we say we'll do everything we can to protect them. At what point does this not become a question of political will, but a moral imperative?

Thank you