

To the Committee on Gun Violence,

As a 65-year old grandmother from Harwinton, I strongly support gun safety legislation that provides universal background checks and bans on assault weapons and high capacity magazines, both for future sales and for removal from the state.

My grandchildren are 3, 6, 8, and 10. I have never written to my congressional representatives or been politically active, but I feel that I must speak out now. I feel very strongly that we must find effective ways to make our children safer in an increasingly violent culture in America. I know there are no easy answers and there are many contributing factors. But we must take some action and we must take it now! Even one change can help to save a life and saving even one life will make a difference. None of us can bear the pain of another tragedy like Newtown or even one more death from a gun in the wrong hands.

I urge you to make some initial changes now that are responsible, obvious changes for gun safety. I do not support the arming of teachers in our schools because I don't believe that the characteristics that make a good teacher would make a safe gun handler. I would hate to see a teacher forced to live with an accident or a killing that he/she was responsible for. I feel that limiting access to assault weapons by the public is the best first step to help ensure safety. This can be done without infringing on the rights of responsible gun owners who can still safely use recreational style guns. I believe private citizens do not need assault type weapons that were designed to maximize the number of shots per minute. I think that only professionals in the armed services and police force should be allowed to use assault type weapons to protect private citizens because they are trained and must follow strict regulations.

I agree that root causes and mental health services also need to be pursued, but a first step should be to limit public access to deadly assault weapons that often end up in the wrong hands. I don't have any statistics or professional designations to support my testimony. I only have my love for the sanctity of human life and the desire to protect **life**, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

In closing, I have to ask why the private sector does not have the same type of strong safety regulations and protections for gun control as our professional military and police forces have? It seems to me that when assault weapons and high capacity magazines have such a potential for causing great harm to our society when in the wrong hands, we are obligated as a responsible society to provide greater safeguards. Let us please honor those who have lost their lives from guns in the wrong hands by passing and enforcing responsible gun safety legislation.

Thank you.  
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