

Dear Bipartisan Task Force on Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety, Gun Violence Working Group,

I just signed Yale School of Public Health's petition "[Enforce restrictions on civilian use and possession of assault rifles](http://www.change.org/petitions/enforce-restrictions-on-civilian-use-and-possession-of-assault-rifles)" on Change.org.

Senator Looney, Representative Miner, Senator McKinney, Representative Sharkey, and Distinguished Members of the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group for the Bipartisan Task Force on Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety: During our lives, we have witnessed a series of unspeakable tragedies—a series that has replayed in America's schools over and over again. After each rampage we believe things will be different. Each time, the gun control debate is renewed and powerful interest groups deflect the issue. Before long, enough time has passed that the voices demanding change are drowned out by the drone of complacency. As students, staff members, and faculty at the Yale School of Public Health and as members of the greater Yale University and Connecticut communities, we are writing today because America is in the midst of an epidemic of gun violence. We can no longer watch idly as our country's children and families suffer. The second amendment was ratified to protect the ability of the people to defend their newborn democracy against governmental oppression. It is important to remember that the second amendment was written during a different era. It was an important right when the physical and political landscape was filled with danger and uncertainty. The weapons it was designed to protect were cumbersome to carry and slow to fire—entirely different than today's lightweight, powerful guns capable of firing dozens of rounds in a minute. The arms paradigm has changed drastically since the birth of the second amendment, just as the threat of governmental oppression and personal safety has transformed. We now live in a world with global military powers, extensive police forces, and a powerful legal system. There is no longer a reason to allow or tolerate the civilian possession of these military grade munitions that are so frequently turned against our own communities. As such, we are writing in support of the following measures: 1. Banning civilian use or possession of assault rifles as defined by the NYSAFE Act. 2. Banning high capacity ammunition magazines. 3. Requiring universal background checks on all firearm sales and transfers. 4. Strengthening requirements for gun registration and permits. 5. Strongly encouraging safe gun storage by owners. 6. Imposing stricter penalties for the illegal purchase or possession of firearms. You have an opportunity to help break the extremely costly cycle of violence. Please take the first step by voting to pass these measures. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Nicole West New Haven, Connecticut

There are now 44 signatures on this petition. Read reasons why people are signing, and respond to Yale School of Public Health by clicking here:

<http://www.change.org/petitions/enforce-restrictions-on-civilian-use-and-possession-of-assault-rifles?response=0bee2debab37>