

Dear Representatives and Senators of the Committee,

All of us have been greatly troubled by the heinous events that took place at Sandy Hook. In the aftermath of such a tragedy, we are seeking solutions to prevent another horrific incident from ever happening again in our fine state. For that, I praise our efforts to come together as a community to solve these issues. With that being said, some of the proposals put forth by our lawmakers

while well intentioned are terribly misguided. More gun control, particularly of the variety being proposed currently, is not the solution we are seeking that is necessary to help prevent, deter, and stop another mass shooting or ameliorate violence in Connecticut. Restricting the rights of law-abiding gun owners is not the answer we ought to be seeking.

I will be brief and address the issue of a proposed magazine capacity limit and propose sensible alternatives.

You may have heard our firemen, EMS, and police often called first responders. Let me propose to you that anyone present during a shooting or any act of violence, whether they be legally armed or unarmed, are the first responders on scene. When lives are on the line and seconds count, and emergency responders are minutes away, the law-abiding citizens of Connecticut are already present and able to respond. Please, I beseech this committee to not further restrict the law-abiding citizens of Connecticut from their ability to defend themselves against would-be murderers. A magazine capacity limit will hinder any Connecticut handgun permit owner from exercising their right to self defense and compromise their ability to respond to said dangers. Every round in every magazine is a potential life-saver. Criminals by definition show a flagrant disregard to the law. Often those in law enforcement rightfully complain about being out-gunned by criminals. Please do not make it harder on the law-abiding citizens of Connecticut to defend themselves against criminals who will have no reservations violating a magazine capacity restriction, just as they already have no reservations against assault, rape, murder, or illegal use and possession of a firearm. In a life or death situation, we only have once chance to defend ourselves, or someone else, and if someone loses their life because their firearm only holds 10 rounds as opposed to the 14 it was designed to have, that is wholly unacceptable and tragic.

However, let's assume the ban on magazines over 10-rounds passes, and the criminal does not acquire a magazine in excess of 10-rounds. A magazine capacity limit did absolutely nothing to prevent Columbine from happening despite the murderers from using exclusively 10-round magazines, nor did any such limit on capacity effect the Virginia Tech murders which were partially perpetrated with 10-round magazines. The magazine capacity restrictions did not lower the lethality of the murderer's weapons, who bypassed the 10-round limit by simply carrying multiple 10-round magazines, and could change out magazines in under 3 seconds. Furthermore these mass murderers carry multiple firearms in addition to multiple magazines. However, carrying multiple firearms and/or magazines for permit holders is not very practical, nor is it a reasonable expectation. Should a permit holder in Connecticut be forced to carry not one, but two or three "backup" guns on them in case they run out of ammunition to defend themselves? Or two extra magazines in case the worst happens when one magazine with excess of 10 rounds and one gun would suffice? The reason most permit holders do not carry backup handguns or extra magazines on them is because they are heavy, cumbersome, and seriously difficult to conceal. Frankly that level of everyday protection is totally impractical. Criminals intent on

mayhem and murder, however, would have no such reservations about weight, comfort, size, or practicality. We have all heard stories of police and armed citizens having to fire many, many times at assailants--sometimes more than 10--and yet the threat continued.

I carry a CZ 75 P-01, a 9mm pistol, which is designed to hold 14 rounds in the magazine, standard. God forbid if something terrible were to happen to me, or my family, or even an innocent bystander, all I would have to protect myself or someone else in that awful situation is 14 chances. Only 14 chances to stop a threat and save a life, up against someone who may have 20 or more and is hellbent on murder. Yet this proposed legislation would see my odds reduced against such danger, down to only 10 chances to protect life, a seemingly arbitrary number. With the stakes so high can there ever be enough chances to save your life, or someone you love? No one ever involved in a gun fight wishes they had had fewer bullets.

According to the Brady Campaign Against Gun Violence, Connecticut already ranks within the top five states with the strictest gun control measures. And they worked to stop Adam Lanza from legally obtaining a firearm in our state. But no law will prevent a determined madman, or any determined criminal, from illegally obtaining guns via theft, force, or illicit means. I do not submit to you that we ought to do nothing. On the contrary, I ask of our lawmakers to consider sensible policies not driven by emotion and a desire to "do something" despite the costs to our freedoms, but to consider the following: eliminate gun free zones in our state! Of the past 61 mass murder in the United States, 60 of them have been committed in gun free zones (as of December 31, 2012)! While it is true that correlation does not equal causation, that one simple stat is as highly correlative as they come. We should not be denying anyone who has been authorized by the state, such as a person who holds a Permit to Carry Pistols and Revolvers, who has passed numerous background checks at all levels--local, state, and federal--from being denied the most effective tool of self defense: their firearm. Gun free zones do not work, and only serve as invitations to mayhem. Perhaps a law ought to be proposed stating that anyone harmed by a gunman in a gun free zone is entitled to recompense for medical bills, pain and suffering, and lost wages? Make the property owner assume strict liability for any gun violence on premises if they disarm law-abiding citizens. Or remove the statute in question empowering gun free signs from having the force of law in Connecticut. Moreover, Connecticut should adopt a stand your ground law (HB-5165), to protect those who have used self-defense, streamline and remove barriers and costs for law-abiding citizens to obtain a Permit to Carry Pistols and Revolvers, and to focus on mental health issues and school safety regardless of whether or not some in the legislature considers those issues to be "local problems."

On behalf of myself, my family, gun owners in Connecticut, and as someone just as effected by the tragedy at Sandy Hook, I urge you to please reconsider this legislative course on gun control, specifically with regards to any magazine capacity limit. It is us, the law-abiding citizens and law-abiding gun owners, who will follow the law and restrict ourselves to 10 rounds in our magazines. The criminals will not follow any such wishful yet sadly misguided law. Murderers will still be able to easily obtain magazines in quantities beyond 10 rounds. Yet even if they didn't, no restrictions on magazine size will reduce a murderer's ability to murder--they will compensate by carrying multiple magazines and firearms; a feat impractical for everyday law-abiding permit holders. Please do not reduce my or anyone's else odds to defend ourselves. Do not strip us of our rights by passing ineffective gun control legislation. Our true goal ought to be to protect our children, and make our communities safer, and to that end we should take

reasonable measures as stated above to achieving our combined goal. Together we can work to make Connecticut a safer place to live. As a reminder, please remember that I will be monitoring your performance on these issues and that I vote. In fact, you will find that gun owners are largest demographic of single-issue voters.

Thank you for your time,
Sincerely,
Patrick James Devine