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To: BIPARTISAN TASK FORCE ON GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND CHILDREN'S SAFETY

I submit the following testimony for your review and consideration.

I feel I am compelled to act to speak out against what I consider to be extreme reactions to the recent events at Sandy Hook. No sane person condones what happened. What we have to bear in mind as we look for lessons learned is that this was not a sane person. We cannot enact legislation that looks to prevent the actions of a madman by trampling the rights of millions. This is exactly the reaction I see from some extreme anti-gun groups and even more disappointingly from some of Connecticut's own legislators. Some of you sitting on this very panel. Even more infuriating is that these legislators and groups always start out their list of proposed changes by stating "I support the second amendment". Then propose a series of extremist actions that are clearly in violation of this very amendment. My analogy is like saying I support the first amendment and free speech, but we'll pass laws that say what words you can use, how many, when you can say them, and where they can be said. Those restrictions would never be tolerated by a free people. Why should we tolerate the same assault on our second amendment rights?

The proposals to ban semi-automatic weapons and magazine capacities are clearly in violation of the second amendment and recent US Supreme Court rulings that have held as unconstitutional the ban of classes of weapons. The most basic constitutional research will reveal this. To continue to pursue these restrictions is political grandstanding, a waste of the resources of the taxpayer and dilutes efforts from more constructive opportunities.

Much of the rhetoric from extreme anti-gun groups and legislators focuses on my "need" for a certain weapon or magazine. They are in no position to determine what I "need" to exercise my constitutional rights. What I "need" to hunt, what I "need" to target shoot, or most importantly what I "need" to defend my family and my country. That privilege is granted to me by virtue of being an American and the rights associated with that honor.

All tragedies have lessons to be learned. I'm sure there are here as well. That focus needs to be on understanding how to identify and treat those whose mental state has the potential for this type of tragedy. Unless this is accomplished they will always find some type of weapon – not necessarily a firearm – to wreak violence and you will find yourself having this hearing again in the future wondering how could this have happened again we banned AR-15's didn't we?