

As I am unable to attend the public hearing on Monday January 28, 2013 I am submitting my thoughts on "gun violence prevention" by e-mail.

It has been estimated that there are more firearms in the United States than there are citizens. Any attempt by legislatures to somehow prevent violence by people using firearms by making certain kinds of firearms illegal are acts of futility. No law can prevent the criminal or disturbed person from committing acts of violence. It is assumed that the legislature will decide to stop firearm violence by curtailing access to certain types of firearms or certain accessories. I believe that such action is a political agenda. If this happens, only law abiding citizens will be affected, perhaps turned into felons by not knowing or understanding that the weapons they legally own are now illegal. How is this preventing violence?

The legislature should understand that Connecticut is the home to several firearm companies that employ hundreds of people, making rifles, pistols, shotguns and the dreaded "high capacity" magazines. Is it the intent of the legislature to put these companies out of business by making their products illegal? Or perhaps, by the action of the legislature, to force these companies to leave Connecticut and move to more gun-friendly states. Is this the way to prevent prevent firearm violence? It is a way to create even more unemployment in the state.

If the legislature truly wants to try and prevent firearm violence, it should create laws that will put the people who commit such violence in prison for a long time. I would suggest that a 20 year sentence for any crime involving a firearm-a term that cannot be plea-bargained away-be instituted. Punish the criminal, not the object being used to commit the crime. Emotional, knee-jerk responses to events do not solve the problem. The Constitution of the State of Connecticut and the United States both guarantee the right of the people to own firearms. This guarantee has nothing to do with hunting as often stated by some politicians. The purpose of the right to "bear arms" has everything to do with the freedom of the people to be secure in their life and property from a tyrannical government and to protect themselves and their family from criminals. Connecticut has more than enough laws on the books dealing with gun violence. Proper enforcement of what we have should be the aim of the legislature not creating more obstacles for the law abiding citizens of the state.

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