

Thank you for organizing this effort to protect our citizens and bring common sense to the discussion of gun control. I wish I could attend Monday's session but I will be there in spirit.

As a 20-year resident of Newtown CT and father to 3 kids who know Newtown as their only town, we have struggled to make sense of this tragedy, but also to make sense of the rabid polarization of the discussions afterward. There are a very large number of people on both extremes of the debate - rid the world of all guns v. fear of the government seizing them all - where common sense - please everyone, common sense - tells us there is a balance that is achievable through dialog and compromise. As simplistic as it sounds, I ask only that those extremes listen to each other, and hopefully today is a start for this.

There is a place in our community and our country for civil liberties, for protection, and for working together for balance. I truly believe in the right to own a gun – legally so, of course. But much like an automobile, there is nothing intrusive to our liberties or our place in society to require that we register our guns; therefore closing loopholes in the law is asking little of legally abiding citizens and their rights. No one is coming to take these guns away – remember, that's the Fourth Amendment on the gun owners' side as well – so they are yours to keep if you can abide by the law, yours to use for sport or home protection as long as you do so with safety AND WITH OTHERS IN MIND, including our law enforcement. The Second Amendment gives us this right, within the context of organized protection – that is one of the main reasons that a militia is mentioned first in this very same Amendment, so that our town/state/nation's safety can be counted upon by these gun owners and so that the strength and knowledge of who-owns-what can be known by those who need to know this strength...hence registration of all guns.

My belief is that the ban for high-capacity magazines is actually a compromise in itself: gun control advocates say you should never need 30 rounds at a time for anything but massive murders; gun owners claim it is an infringement on their Second Amendment rights to own whatever they please, and it is an inconvenience to reload after 10 rounds when shooting skeet, or deer, or various inanimate (and animate) objects. But again, please, WITH OTHERS IN MIND, I ask that both sides see this bill to ban high-capacity magazines as a concession:

--Gun control advocates: let gun owners keep their weapons and accept that guns are part of our culture for good (I mean that both ways), but ask nothing more than for the owners remain less-armed than our law enforcement officers, and as long as these owners keep their personal arsenals known and within the realm of respect for these officers' own capabilities and needs. Don't allow your fight to prohibit their rights to legal ownership; that is not the real issue. Being "overarmed" is the issue.

--Gun ownership advocates: of course you keep your legally owned guns – even your assault rifles – but keep them registered, safe and within reasonable usage levels, by which I mean that such high-capacity magazines only put our law enforcement personnel at an unsafe disadvantage.

And though it may inconvenience you to reload after 10 rounds, how necessary is a 30-round clip for you and the skeet/deer/intruder, really, when it only requires a few rounds at most?

As a Newtown parent and as a law-abiding member of society, I ask nothing more than for everyone to temper your comments with an air of concern and compromise for all. The first two Amendments penned by our nation's founders well over 200 years ago are being strained by this very discussion...and the words of Thomas Paine from that same era – author of the aptly-named *Common Sense* – that “these are the times that try men's souls” have never been truer. Both his *American Crisis* and *Common Sense* (if I remember my history correctly) were a call to action, and a call for discussion. We are now experiencing an American crisis, so now more than ever we need action, we need discussion, and we need common sense.

Thank you for your time.

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