

INTRODUCTION

Hello my name is Robert Clark and I live here in the great State of Connecticut. I say great because I am a direct male descendant of Deacon George Clarke who emigrated here in the year 1638 and a direct male descendent of a Revolutionary war patriot Jehiel Clark, of Milford, who served in the defense of New York city, allowing General George Washington freedom of maneuver with his forces which later won the war. Today I am here to testify in order to help provide information to you regarding the Second Amendment and a right to bear arms and I probably will provide the largest amount of information from different sources and experiences than anyone else before you today. The information I provide today is unbiased because I am unaffiliated in regards to political party, I am not a lobbyist, and I am not here on behalf of any group.

BACKGROUND

My experience consists of 14 years in law enforcement as a **certified police officer** in New Haven. There I served in many different capacities to include patrol operations, school liaison officer, Street Interdiction Detail (SID), and 4 1/2 years serving on the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). During my career I responded to dozens, if not into the hundreds, of homicides and shootings investigations of all types within the city. At age 17, I enlisted into the US Army Reserve and retired 20 years after with a rank of Major as a **combat veteran**. I deployed twice as a Civil Affairs (CA) officer and participated during the invasion into northern Iraq in 2003 to assist the a great oppressed people, the Kurds. There I was the area commander approximately 1/3 the size of Rhode Island with over 80,000 people consisting of over 110 villages and oversaw all facets of the government. I am also a **WWII firearm collector** many of which were made here in the great state of Connecticut by Winchester in New Haven and Underwood here in Hartford. As a federally licensed firearm (**FFL**) **dealer** an experience that gives me a large background into the types of paperwork and laws that goes into the transfer of firearms. Eight days after the tragedy I was on hand, with many other officers, **providing security to residents of Newtown** while they gave out toys to their children. As stated before, I believe that I'm probably the one of the most informed people testifying before you here today. I'm here for myself only, giving one person's opinion to help you in making a more informed decisions for the future. I do not belong to any political party, Democratic nor Republican, but a true independent, voting from my conscience for the right person. I have no allegiance to any program or groups, nor do I succumb to any types of political action type groups.

THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS

Laws are enacted to benefit the public and to protect them, but not at the expense of their constitutional rights or civil liberties granted threw the Constitution or laws. No one takes an issue with making things harder on

criminals, however the proposed laws will have an impact only on those who abide by them and will not have any impact on those bent on breaking the law and doing evil. The common thread of all these celebrated cases is a mad person behind the gun, not the type of gun.

AGAINST: I believe that since the Newtown tragedy and before with the 1994 LA bank robbery, that politicians and media had a feeding frenzy with anti-gun legislation which did not impact with any quantitative results towards the reduction in murders or how murders happened in regards to firearms. Look at the anti-gun groups for proof. **I do not support any assault weapons ban.** I do believe that first of all that the term "assault weapon" is a made up and does not accurately reflect ANY word found in any military. **I also do not approve of releasing the names and addresses of current state pistol permit holders.** I also **do not support any blanket mandatory background checks for ammunition purchases.** I am also **against ALL ex post facto laws made by this legislature.** I am also **staunchly against any taxes and/or any registration fees, or any fees associated with any new legislation.** Funding should be provided by general state funds such as free needles to drug addicts or the like.

FOR: I do favor some forms of regulations in that I do believe that the state is a little ahead of other states in the nation in that we **require a authorization number given from the State Police for the transfer firearms which needs to be applied here in our state to all firearms** not just mandatory for handguns. I am also favor a **national background check for all firearms in the United States.** As Connecticut legislators you are in between us, the people, and the national government and you need to bring forward our concerns to the national level regarding the importance of **closing the loopholes from other states.** I am **in favor of ammunition bans for those who not have a pistol permit or hunting license** to reduce the likely hood of ammunition falling into criminals hands. If including others to purchase they must prove by showing a Connecticut state issued ID which should be tracked by our Connecticut Firearms Unit and also to provide proof of gun ownership regarding that caliber. I do not support any blanket ex post facto type laws but I do **support a ban on newly manufactured magazines that exceed 10 rounds.** I'm very comfortable with that but the amount of magazines that are over 10 rounds currently in circulation right now are in the tens of millions, probably hundreds of millions, and there is just no way to enforce this in less you want to make a citizen a criminal. I support new laws where the criminal who uses a firearm with a magazine over 10 rounds should be another felony charge. One of my other gripes with the legislature is we do not do a good enough job on the existing laws which needs to be changed for criminals with harsher sentences, stop doing concurrent sentences and suspended sentences, for these criminals who are committing the majority crime despite their relatively few in number. I do also **support the abolition of armor piercing and/or incendiary ammunition** for non-law enforcement and/or military personnel. Since the inception of the "assault weapons ban" in 1994 very few people ever are killed with these rifles in this

state. Since then the majority of homicides we had in New Haven from 1996 to 2012 resulted in 307 murders. Of these murders about 79% were committed with firearms. With the data provided, and through speaking with members of the department who process crime scenes, approximately 6% of these firearm murders are conducted with long guns (i.e. rifles and shotguns). During this same time frame there were 4 murders with long guns and 34 murders with knives or about 9x as likely. With the evidence with such a large problem of murders in New Haven the government should be focused on reducing handgun violence rather than "assault weapons".

A detriment of releasing any Connecticut pistol permit holders is a violation of our right to privacy, not only is it dangerous to the individual but also to the rest of their families. Just because one has a pistol permit does not mean they have any weapons or handguns in the home. Some use the permit so they have the ability of shopping when they can purchase a legal hunting rifle or shotgun and carry it out of the store at that time. The worst fallout of releasing this information would be **advertising current or retired police or correctional officers, judges, attorneys, bankers, or storeowners to public for no purpose** whatsoever other than "inquiring minds want to know." Law enforcement does not have the man power or the time to track ammunition sales when the resources doing background checks are poor to begin with as far as accuracy in the maintenance of individual files.

I'm staunchly **against any type of ex post facto law** where I am an upstanding citizen of this State of Connecticut legally and true to word and deed, that no one shall make us a felon or criminal tomorrow by laws you maybe be considering today or tomorrow. One of the reasons why you saw such a huge turnout on the 19th of January here at the capital is due to the rightfully perceived worry regarding what some legislatures are trying to pass against us. We believe as citizens we have the absolute right to own firearms. With that said there's a group called the Oath Keepers who are made up of many current and retired police officers, military members, and firefighters who stated that their oath of allegiance is to the Constitution and not to the executive, legislative, or judicial branches of government but to uphold the Constitution of United States and the state. They represent the highest standard above all else and that any illegal laws that are made they will not enforce those laws because of their oath they have no obligation to carry out any illegal orders. I would state even further with going back to that we're citizens, not criminals, that individual criminal behavior is the failure of humanity within themselves and not real citizens. If people on the other side of the issue were so concerned about saving human life why don't we reduce the speed limit from 65 mph to 55 to save tax money and lives from the and have laws against cars imported into this state that cannot exceed 75 mph? This would save dozens and dozens of people every year. What about the health sector making a mental health database by clinicians, who can provide information and maintaining on the temporary or permanent mentally defective people, with read only access for the state Firearms Unit for inquires on gun

authorization transfers? What's wrong with the whole idea of being a clinician, to "do no harm", with putting information in a database? We can see the same thing about the reporting of abuse with mandatory reporting laws of people regarding child or elderly abuse. What's the difference between a clinician who believes that the person is a threat of themselves or others or making a DCF report to the government?

I would like to advise you, with the event which occurred on 19 January, law abiding citizens continue to build overwhelming numbers for which the state has never seen before. This time I believe were are not going to go away like after 1994 legislation where we rolled over. We feel we have been pushed so far into the corner with the stick from poor legislation and the media presence, that the stick is going to break. I want to share this with you, my personal resolve, as a combat veteran, as one who wears a bullet resistance vest every day at work, and lastly as a descendant of the founders of this great country, and when I was 17 years old, while in basic training. Article I of the US Code of Conduct, it's the only one I remember to this day because I felt it demonstrates my allegiance to my country and the Constitution above all else.

"I am an American fighting man, I serve in the forces which guard our country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense."

What is your level of resolve? I thank you for allowing me to testify today and I'll be available to any of you in help drafting any new legislation. Please ask Rep. Mary M. Mushinsky or Sen. Len Fasano for my contact information. Thank you again and ESSAYONS!