

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

My Name is Shawn Mitola. I am a husband and a father of 2 girls. I am a law abiding citizen and current holder of a CT state pistol permit. I write to you today to plead with you to not pass anymore pointless and ineffective legislation regarding firearms. Primarily I'd like you to take a look at New York as an example of what not to do. They pushed through their law so quickly that they have now created more problems for themselves than they solved. Gun control doesn't stop crime. It only affects the law abiding citizens who are the very people you want to have the guns. Criminals always find a way to get guns, and there will always be gun violence in this country. Unless you are able to magically round up every firearm in the country and then seal our borders so that no more guns can enter, you will ALWAYS have gun violence. Many of these new laws that have been suggested already fly in the face of several Supreme court rulings. Why should law abiding citizens pay the price for criminals and madmen who wish to do others harm? By passing legislation like this you hamper our ability to defend ourselves from ALL threats. Can you promise us that once these laws are passed that gun violence will go down? Of course you can't. The statistics speak for themselves. Since the 1994 Assault Weapons ban expired gun ownership rates have been steadily rising yet crime rates have been going down.

We are not responsible for these tragedies that the media sensationalizes. We want to be able to defend our homes and our families. We want to enjoy a hobby that like so many other hobbies isn't a life necessity but rather a source of enjoyment and fun. Answer me this. If no one NEEDS an assault weapon, then why do we sell motorcycles, jet skis, parachutes, 200mph cars? No one needs these things yet they are readily available for purchase and kill as many if not more than guns every year. They are hobbies and people participate in them because they are enjoyable. In some cases they compete with one another. I challenge you to look into the Iron Man shooting competitions as just one example of using an assault rifle for sport.

Don't mistake my enthusiasm for guns for a lack of realism. I know we need gun laws and I support legislation that would truly get guns out of the hands of criminals and the mentally ill. I can support background checks on every gun purchase, even private transfers; but that system must be made available to more people. The last gun I purchased I waited almost an hour trying to get through to the DPS to get my approval number. What I can not and will not support is any type of ban on a specific weapon or a limit to magazine capacity. What would you suggest we do when you limit us to 10 rounds and there are no 10 round magazines available? Are you going to pay restitution to every CT citizen who is forced to throw away and purchase new magazines? Will you grandfather in currently owned mags, and if you do what will that do? There are hundreds of thousands of these standard capacity mags owned in CT. Make no mistake when I say standard capacity I mean the magazine the gun was designed to hold. The term High capacity magazine has only been around since the 94' ban. Let me ask you another question. Why do you exempt police from the magazine limit restriction? Are their lives more valuable than mine? Why would they require more than 10 rounds? If they are trained more than the average citizen then they should be more accurate and able to make each shot count. With hundreds of thousands if not millions of 10+ magazines in circulation can you honestly say that passing this law will stop criminals from having these mags? Of course you can't. Cocaine, meth, Crack, ecstasy, these drugs have been outlawed for decades yet they still litter our streets and kill our kids. Tell

me... how well has that ban worked out? We can't stop illegal immigrants from entering this country, how do you propose to stop guns?

I understand that in the wake of Sandy Hook everyone is crying out for change, and for "something to be done" however; you can't force unreasonable legislation down the throats of law abiding citizens. You will cause more problems than you would hope to solve. Instead of passing pointless legislation that will only affect people that choose to follow the laws why don't we have better enforcement of the laws we already have? Fix mental health issues. For god's sake put better security in our schools. Give teachers and administrators the option of defending themselves or put a cop in every school. You'll find that people would be more than willing to pay a little more in our taxes to have this kind of security in our schools. There is a reason these madmen go to schools and not police stations. They want to go out in a blaze of glory before they die. They are sick and we should do everything we can to deprive them of target rich environments.

Thank you for your time,
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