

Below please find a piece by me that was published in the Greenwich Time Newspaper. It encapsulates my request for stronger gun regulation. I add, for your benefit, that I support universal background checks and a ban on internet sales of guns or ammunition. Thank you very much for your leadership in making Connecticut a leader in sensible regulation of guns.

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Op-Ed: Speak up for sensible gun regulations for Connecticut

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In the aftermath of the unthinkable tragedy that took place in the [Sandy Hook Elementary School](#) in Newtown on December 14, it has fallen to Connecticut to be the state that finally changes the conversation, and the laws, dealing with the role that guns have played in these all-too-frequent atrocities.

I want to be clear: I am not opposed to gun ownership. I am the daughter of a responsible hunter. I have eaten more venison and plucked more birds than I can remember. For most of us, this conversation is not about prohibiting gun ownership.

The extremists and the [NRA](#), however, talk only as if a total ban is the entire conversation. This serves them well. It sells guns and airtime and panics their followers into purchasing even more of the most dangerous guns. This is absolutely ridiculous. A total ban on gun ownership is not going to happen. The [Supreme Court](#) has affirmed and even strengthened the Second Amendment right to bear arms in the United States. What our state and federal governments have every right to do, and must do, is to effectively regulate these deadly weapons. At a minimum, there is no need for any civilian to have an assault rifle or a high-capacity clip. None. Period. Immediately we must reinstate a national assault weapons ban.

Sadly, following the Newtown massacre, in a remarkable show of arrogance and ignorance, the gun lobby has once again transferred all responsibility to others. They blame the mental health system, video games, violent movies, the lack of armed guards (in our elementary schools -- imagine!), the media and even our president. They will do and say anything that will steer the conversation away from the real issue -- the unprecedented proliferation of guns and the overwhelming increase in firepower and lethality of military-style assault weapons augmented by large-capacity magazines that turn already dangerous weapons into mass killing machines.

They are supported by those who profit from the sale of firearms and ammunition. More guns, in schools or wherever else, means more money for gun sellers -- not safer schools. The gun lobby's scare tactics have already resulted in the sale of even more of the most deadly guns since the mid-December slaughter of innocents in Connecticut.

The tragic reality of the Newtown shooting is that the guns were legally purchased and owned by someone who thought she would use them for her own self-defense, but who was killed by them instead.

Even in Connecticut, where gun regulation is among the most stringent of all the states, obtaining a machine that could mow down small children was possible.

This has to stop.

Maybe not all deaths can be prevented, but many more lives can be saved if we have the strength to take reasonable steps and set limits. We must act now to protect our families and our communities. We must regain control of this conversation.

Wise and thoughtful citizens and legislators in Connecticut have worked together to propose a comprehensive, bipartisan legislative package which includes a strengthening of the state's assault weapons ban; a ban on large-capacity ammunition magazines; a ban on Internet sales of firearms and ammunition to Connecticut citizens; stricter controls on ammunition sales; and stronger penalties for disregarding safe storage and access requirements in the home.

Our legislators respond to the voices of those who elect them. Many of our legislators have opposed these types of protective measures in the past because the loudest voices have been those of the militant minority. Sensible legislation will be supported, however, if you, by your actions, speak up and show elected officials that it is we,

not the extremists and the gun lobby, who will determine appropriate access to these dangerous weapons. Tell them that we will accept no excuses this time. The tipping point has been reached.

[Susan Bevan](#) is a Greenwich resident.