

Ladies and Gentlemen of the committee,

I adamantly oppose any legislation that would further limit the firearms and ammunition that are available to responsible, law abiding citizens in this state!

A firearm in the hands of honorable citizens is a concept that was looked upon favorably by the authors of the US Constitution, as well as the authors of Connecticut's constitution. Both documents refer to these as being individual rights, as well as being necessary for the security or defense of the state. In the DC vs. Heller case, the US Supreme Court affirmed that the language of the second amendment does indeed pertain to individual citizens!

Some would argue that the intent of those documents would not include the more efficient firearms that are available in these modern times. If that is the case, then why didn't they restrict private ownership of the then "state of the art" weapons of their times? Why weren't the citizens limited to swords, spears and blunt objects? I propose that the intent of the authors was to provide maximum individual freedom to the citizenry of the time, as well as to future generations. Those simpler firearms were no more likely to attack innocents back then, than are the semi-automatic firearms of today! They are simply tools, inanimate machines that are utilized at the discretion of the operator. I would not want a madman to possess a firearm in any configuration, nor would I want them to have stabbing or cutting tools!

I know that there is confusion in the public as to the definition of a "semiautomatic" firearm. I hear it from time to time on one of the local talk radio stations, as well as in conversations with people who are not knowledgeable with firearms, so I know this is pertinent. The operation of a semiautomatic firearm (deemed an "assault weapon" by some), whether a rifle, shotgun or pistol, requires the user to press the trigger each time a round is to be discharged. The firearm will then utilize recoil or some of the propelling gasses from the fired round to operate the loading mechanism, thus automatically loading the chamber. The process then comes to a STOP, until the trigger is released and then pressed again. "Fully-automatic" firearms differ in that they will continue to fire as long as the trigger is depressed and there is still ammunition available in the magazine. These fully automatic firearms are not a part of the present legislative conversation due to extremely tight regulations and availability.

Rather than taxing or banning certain firearms from honorable citizens, legislators should be focusing their efforts on removing dangerous individuals from amongst us! Any laws that this or any legislature will pass are really only as effective as the law-abiding citizens who will obey them! Gun-free zones are a case in point. It turns out that everyone at Sandy Hook was following that policy, except for one!! This is madness and further restricting responsible people from the ability to defend themselves and their loved ones is negligent! Reasonable people can agree that no person or program can totally predict what another person will do. There may be suspicion that an individual "could" be capable of committing a crime, but until they do there is really nothing that society can do. This is one of the "cracks" that criminals will "slip through" and the last line of defense against these criminals will always be their potential victim(s).

Our law enforcement personnel are essential in maintaining order in our society. They put their lives at risk in dealing with people during each and every shift, as well as responding to immediate emergencies during their off-duty time. They are indeed first responders to whatever befalls us, but they cannot be expected to be able to protect us 24/7. 911 is an excellent resource that links us to the police in time of emergency, but 911 is only one step in a plan of defense and not a plan in and of itself. A lot can happen during the lag of response time. Response times are also affected by weather or natural disasters and will also be affected by man-made incidents such as the LA riots or a Sept 11th type attack. In the lack of the immediate presence of law enforcement, a person's defense is still of immediate concern and is not to be taken lightly!

The only way to confront the criminal use of deadly force is with immediate use of deadly force by the potential victim! Deadly force is defined by that amount of force that is likely to cause severe bodily injury or death. While the firing of one bullet is certainly considered "deadly force," and the attacker may indeed die, they may not do so until after they have completed the evil task that they are already

engaged in. This is why knowledgeable defensive firearms instructors do not teach their students to shoot to kill, they teach them to shoot until the attack is stopped. There have been cases where the criminal had to be shot repeatedly by police before their threat was finally neutralized. In one case in Cook County, Illinois an individual did not break off his attack even after being shot 33 times by police with 9mm pistols. He was finally STOPPED by two additional shotgun slugs that were fired into his torso.

The amount of ammunition that a firearm can contain should be decided by its lawful owner and no one else! The individual will make the decision of how much ammo to carry, based on his/her requirements. In addition, taxing ammunition or restricting its lawful purchase or possession will reduce the amount of training that responsible citizens will be able to obtain!

I am heartbroken at the loss of the innocents that were mercilessly taken away at Sandy Hook. I pray for the families and friends of the murdered children and staff members as well as the survivors of that day, including the first responders. Punishing responsible, law abiding citizens is not an answer to the problem. If the elements of our society, that spend so much time and effort in demonizing the NRA and responsible gun-owners, would instead focus on punishing criminals as well as addressing mental health issues we would be better off!

Thank you for your consideration,

Ted Kuracz Jr.

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