

I am writing this because I stand in opposition of any further restrictions on firearms, ammunition, magazines, and my right to own them.

We all have strong feelings of sadness and grief when tragedies like Sandy Hook happen, but emotional responses that ignore the facts are not the solution; to the contrary, they are part of the problem. I have reviewed several of the testimonies submitted on the, "A safer Connecticut" web page, and I attended the hearing on January 28th. I have found that the people who are in favor of stricter controls state that they "think", or "feel" that harsher laws placed upon law abiding gun owners like me will help, but they have provided no facts to back up their position, and ignore the fact that criminals, by definition, don't obey laws. This fact does not support their agenda. Statistically speaking, a child is more likely to die in a school bus related accident, than be killed by some murderous thug in a classroom, yet nobody has suggested that we outlaw buses, and in fact, we still do not require seat belts on them.

Confiscating my guns and magazines from me will not prevent this type of tragedy from happening again. What about the murderous, mentally deranged thug that pulled the trigger? He tried to buy a gun legally but couldn't. (This, by the way, shows that the law WORKS!) He shot his mother in the face four times and stole her guns! Do you think that he bears no responsibility? Or that the state bears none for that matter? I'm sure that many of you remember The Norwich Hospital. It had 300 acres of land, with dozens of buildings on them, housing mentally ill people, until somebody decided that those people have rights and should be put on the street. What do you think happened to all of them? Did they get better overnight? And have people miraculously stopped getting mentally ill since places like that closed? No, they are out there, and they think the same way they always have. If the government steals my rights and property, that is not going to stop the next mentally disturbed individual from walking into a classroom, mall, or movie theater with five gallons of gas and torching even more people, but it will stop me from having the tools to prevent such a tragedy. If they have the right to be free and try to mass murder, I should have the right to have the means to stop them.

The fact is, guns are used thousands of times per year in self defense, estimates range from 162,000, to 2.5 million times. This, however, is only an estimate, because many people do not report using a gun in self defense, partly out of fear of legal ramifications. I know this because although none of my firearms ever took a life, one of them quite possibly saved mine. I was walking alone in a major Connecticut city several years ago, and I was fortunate that it was enough for the two persons that had been shadowing me for an extended period of time to see me open and pull my coat back, and put my hand on my pistol, for them to decide I wasn't as easy a victim as they thought. When I did this, they promptly turned and walked away. Thankfully, I didn't have to remove it from the holster. Did I report that incident? No I did not. No crime against me was actually committed, and I feared that if I reported it, I could possibly get in trouble, because I know that the police often do not know the intricacies of the law, and I feared that I may have had to endure needless legal problems.

I'm not saying that everyone should carry a firearm. I think that people who are convicted felons, and/or mentally deficient shouldn't have guns, but if everyone else did, then those types would be a lot less likely to do damage. It is a fact that more guns in the hands of law abiding citizens reduces crime, per the data collected in The FBI Uniform Crime Reports. Chicago, NYC, Washington DC, all have virtual gun bans, and all have very high murder rates, but when Florida passed their concealed carry law, all categories of violent crime dropped by 1/3-1/2 in the first two years, once again, per data found in The FBI Uniform Crime Reports.

If you dare to think about it, what would serve a school principal better, a "panic button", as some are advocating, in schools, or a Glock 36? Push the panic button, run to the classroom while the cops are on their way, (several minutes away), and then what? Use a stern teacher's voice to reprimand the nut that is killing students? I don't think that works too well. Instead, how about run to the classroom and point a gun at the cowardly scum instead. Chances are, he'd look down the barrel, figure that his time is up, and put the next bullet into his own head. Did you know that the hooligan that was shooting up the Clackamas mall in Oregon a few weeks ago blew his own brains out because he saw a guy who was legally carrying a concealed firearm draw and aim it at him?

On the subject of child safety, I would like to briefly comment on my solution to prevent hundreds, maybe even thousands, of senseless deaths each year that are caused by drunk driving accidents. I would like to propose that we ban Corvettes, Mustangs, Camaros, Chargers, and Vipers, and ban importation of Ferraris, Porches, and Lamborghinis. Also, restrict ownership of any vehicle which may have such dangerous devices as turbochargers, superchargers, tires of more than 8" in width, engines larger than 2.5 litres, racing stripes, and shiny wheels, because these devices obviously make vehicles more dangerous. And who needs more than 7 gallons of gas? We should mandate that newly produced vehicles have only 7 gallon fuel tanks, all current vehicles should only be allowed to have 7 gallons in the tank, and speed governors should be mandated in all vehicles.

I am sure that you must be thinking that that all sounds absurd; after all, guns are different than cars. Well, you're right, guns are different, but the one most significant difference between that analogy and the gun debate is that the constitution says nothing about a right to drive cars, but it guarantees our right to bear arms!

The 2nd amendment is not about hunting, or target shooting. It is a guarantee written by the fathers of this great nation that we the people have the GOD GIVEN RIGHT to protect ourselves and our families from harm, whether that harm be from a thug trying to rape my 17 year old daughter, a foreign country trying to invade this land, or a tyrannical government trying to strip the rights from the people of this country. It's about the militia, (all able bodied adults of sound mind), having MILITARY arms to fulfill their duty to protect self and country from tyranny, both from without and within. And this discussion isn't even about military weapons, because both the federal government and the state of Connecticut already heavily regulate fully automatic military weapons through special taxes and licensure. This is about civilian semi-automatic firearms, not military assault rifles.

In closing, I would like to remind you that in pre WWII Germany, the Nazi the government propaganda machine often used the term "for the good of the children" to push anti gun/anti freedom agendas. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. We need to look back and be vigilant, lest history repeat itself.

I thank you for your time, and once again reiterate that I oppose any, and all, further restrictions on my rights as a gun owner.

Sincerely,

Theodore Picard, Columbia Ct.

Reference material:

Number of children killed in "mass" murders: 161 from 2006-2010 = 40.25/yr.

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2012/12/18/mass-killings-common/1778303/>

Bus related accidents 1998-2008: 142/yr.

<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811165.pdf>

Guns used approximately 2.5 million times per year in self defense:

<http://www.pulpless.com/gunlock/stats.html>

<http://minutemennews.com/2012/12/oregon-mall-shooting-brave-citizen-with-concealed-carry-may-have-saved-lives/>

FBI Uniform Crime Report:

<http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/crimestats>

The 2nd amendment and what it means:

The Constitution of the United States, and the Federalist Papers.