

Senator Kelly:As a mother, a teacher, and a Religious Education Director I am deeply saddened by the violence in our state. Both the Newtown tragedy and the tragedies that happen every day in our inner cities are outrageous and must not be tolerated. I am further outraged that some people seem to believe that more guns are the answer, or that arming our teachers might be a good solution. If someone told me I should keep a gun in my classroom I would need to quit.

As a woman of faith I have tried to pass on to my children the idea that "We don't have to do things back to people who hurt us." Now some would say this mode of thinking is outdated and naive. I don't think so. I don't want my children saying hurtful things back to students who say mean things to them. I don't want them pushing or hitting someone physically who have pushed or hit them. One wrong move does not deserve another. I want them to be women of peace. It seems to be choosing peace is a much more difficult decision than fighting back. In fact, just mention it on facebook and people are likely to call you "UnAmerican". I don't want anything to do with this kind of society.

Please Senator Kelly. Be a voice for peace. There are some things we know: Guns kill; there is a growing number of people in our society who suffer from mental illness and addictions that we have no help for in our health care system; it does not work to have people taking "The law into their own hands."

Work to get guns off of our streets, not in every house. Work to provide services for people who are in desperate need of health care services. Listen to teachers when they tell parents their child needs an evaluation. Do not cut the department of Children and Family Services when our families are falling apart. (and you don't have to be a teacher to see this) Don't take nurses and guidance counselors out of our schools when they are the only ones that can listen to that child whose father was just put into jail that night.

Our problems are complex and difficult. But that does not mean we need to sink to our lowest common denominator. People's individual hobbies cannot control our societies need to act in a civil way.

I look forward to further conversation.

Sincerely,

Therese LeFever

121 Blakeman Place

Stratford, CT 06615