

Dear Distinguished Members of The Bipartisan Task Force on Gun Violence and Children's Safety,

I have been informed that The Bipartisan Task Force on Gun Violence may have public hearings regarding your legislative proposals. I have also been informed that these meetings may only allow for a combination of invited speakers and leaders of organizations that have an interest at hand with the task force.

Please do not cave to Governor Malloy's pressure - ensure that the process is followed and full, open public hearings are held. Governor Malloy is pressuring you to work outside the scope of your oaths for his own political goals not the interest of public safety. I request full public hearings on any legislation that results from recommendations from each task force working group.

There is also no justification for emergency certification of any proposal - and no proposals can be allowed to bypass the normal committee and public hearing process.

Also, I implore each of you to review buried testimony, under "Anonymous 33" on the task force website (<http://www.cga.ct.gov/asafersconnecticut/tmy/0128/Anonymous%2033.pdf>) that was submitted before the first public hearings, showing the results of a survey that is still in progress regarding gun control legislation. There are currently over 3,700 responses to this survey and the results are overwhelmingly against all gun control proposals and future proposals.

Please make all attempts to focus on the true causes of violence in our communities. The socioeconomic situation in the highest crime areas will not be resolved by proposing more gun laws that will force the loss of jobs in the many firearms manufacturers in our state and make it more difficult (costly) for those of us law abiding citizens that wish to own a firearm for personal defense and sporting purposes. New gun control laws will not address the problems with getting adequate mental healthcare for the residents of Connecticut that suffering right now from emotional and mental problems.

I have friends that have experienced this problem with their daughter, she was having difficulties, which lead to drug problems and even her running away to another state. The police were involved and did little, the school system provided some help but not without a great deal of effort on the parents part and a lot of headaches and heartaches from trying to deal with the public school bureaucracy.

Eventually there young daughter was able to get admitted to a hospital in Waterbury were she was grouped together with criminal offenders and just downright scary individuals. This proved to be little help and the parents were forced to admit her to a private facility when a bed was available but even that was a limited time stay and cost a great deal of money. This young woman needed care and the hurdles placed in the path to that care were very difficult to get over for a family that is fairly well off, and even has a professional psychologist as a close relative. It has taken this family years of constant work to get their daughter the help that she has needed and even with regular visits to psychologists and repeated hospital stays it is still a difficult situation. Luckily she was (to the best of my knowledge) never a danger to others but her outbursts and interactions with other men, and running away did have an impact on the whole family.

If a family like that, with experience with mental healthcare has that much trouble getting help how do you expect the average person to get the help they need? This needs to be addressed and corrected, it should be the main focus of your working group not taking guns out away from responsible gun owners. Governor Malloy knows this and he knows that if he doesn't try to push his own agenda through now and get the national spotlight he will miss this opportunity to exploit the tragedy in Sandy Hook, do not let him divert you from your task of examining what polices will actually help make Connecticut Safer.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Thomas Bavone  
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