

To whom it may concern:

I apologize for not presenting this statement in person; work prevents me from attending. As a father of two school age boys, words can't express my feelings of grief regarding the tragic loss of life at the hands of a mentally unstable psychopath. This psychopath, who I will not name to prevent further press coverage, stole firearms from their legal owner and killed her before murdering the children and faculty at the Newtown school. He was not a licensed gun owner. He was an insane thief. Chicago and Washington DC have some of the strictest gun laws in the nation, still gun violence happens at an ever escalating rate. You can't legislate gun violence away. Criminals and mental defective individuals will gain access to firearms if they want them bad enough regardless of the laws that are enacted, they just don't care much about the ramifications of their actions. Severe and mandatory jail sentences can be levied for committing a crime as means of deterrence or repeat offences. If you excessively restrict law abiding citizens from exercising their 2<sup>nd</sup> ammendment right to keep and bear arms it will only play into the hands of the criminals. The people will not have the tools to defend themselves. There is an old saying that says that if guns are outlawed then only outlaws will have guns. Firearm laws in Connecticut are sufficiently strict enough to ensure that only law abiding citizens legally own firearms. The person that committed the atrocity in Newtown was a psychopath not a legal gun owner, why should we penalize the legal gun owners because of his actions?

To protect our children from criminals we should have state or local police patrolling the schools during school hours. They can provide protection to our schools in much the same way they do at road construction projects. The sight of a police car parked in front of a school will be a great deterrent for many types of illegal activity. This protection would have positive effects on our children in different ways; provide protection, a deterrent from breaking the rules at school, and a positive role model for the children to look up to.

In conclusion, we have different methods of preventing another atrocity like the one in Newtown from happening again. Methods of protection should concentrate on protecting our children with a police presence and increase jail terms for crimes committed with firearms. Increasing the regulations and red tape involved in legally owning firearms will do nothing to protect anyone but criminals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Thomas Carter Stafford Springs Connecticut.