

Dear Senators and Representatives of the Committee,

I shoot in competition as well as carrying a handgun for protection. I, like all my gun-owning friends, am a responsible and law-abiding citizen. I am well trained and have a walls and shelves full of trophies and awards to prove my ability with firearms of various types. As a non-professional competitor, I can easily consume 2,000 rounds of ammunition in a month. As a female, in a self-defense situation, I will need every single round in my magazine. The next Hayes and Komisarjevsky will not stop coming after me just because I have used up all of a state-imposed limit of ammunition.

I urge you to not make ill-advised and potentially dangerous decisions based on emotion rather than facts. One of the unintended consequences of artificial limits on ammo capacity is to put the law-abiding at risk of injury or death in a self-defense situation. New York State police do not want to face criminals with 20 rounds when they only have 7 or 10. Neither do I. No sensible person would.

I have not seen a single proposal so far that would have stopped Adam Lanza from killing his mother to steal her guns. Even with her considerable financial means and devoted attention to her troubled son, she was unable to find appropriate services for him in time to prevent a tragedy. Some attention to helping caregivers of the dangerously mentally ill is long overdue and should receive thoughtful consideration prior to restricting the rights of lawful gun owners.

Any gun - pistol, rifle or shotgun - is dangerous in the wrong hands. Limiting what the law-abiding can purchase might stop us from participation in sporting, hunting and competition activities but it will have no effect on what the criminal and the crazy will do. Restrictive state gun laws would also put us at a disadvantage or leave us unable to compete in nation-level events. I have lived in other states and obtaining a permit or purchasing a long gun in Connecticut is already a much more onerous process than in many states. I do not think we are suffering from a lack of gun laws here.

I understand the urge to “do something” in the wake of the Newtown tragedy. I feel the same way and my heart breaks for those families. As an elected person in a position of trust, it is your responsibility to not create a false sense of public security by “doing something” that does not address the real issues. The law-abiding gun owner is not the cause of this problem.

Please consider these three proposals:

Anybody that commits a crime with a gun needs to go to jail and stay there for the entire sentence. Please stop releasing convicted criminals early to prey on the rest of us. 6,500 extra criminals released early in a little state like Connecticut is a lot of opportunity for tragedy and only served to increase our need for self-defense. Please do not compound that mistake with another that would make us less safe by leaving us less able to defend ourselves.

The mentally ill and those that care for them need to be able to access treatment and services without undue delay and difficulty. Provisions for swift, temporary commitment in cases where someone is potentially dangerous should be enacted.

The "Gun-Free Zone" signs should be removed from every school. Advertizing how defenseless our children and teachers are is counter-productive. Any school that wants police protection on site should be able to have an office assigned. Take some money from the busway to pay for it.

I urge you to thoughtfully consider doing something meaningful for the safety of the people of Connecticut.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,  
Tracy Martin  
Bristol, CT.