

Dear Senators and Representatives,

We, as a state, are faced with addressing the shocking tragedy at Sandy Hook elementary. It was upsetting and disturbing to all and like myself, I sure many of you have still not been able to comprehend how someone could commit such a vile act. How we respond to this tragedy in legislation will send a message to the rest of the nation not only about gun laws, but also about the strength, resilience and intelligence of our state. You will all be faced with voting on certain legislation that has been presented in response to this tragedy. I hope you will take the time to evaluate and understand each individual piece of legislation before you vote on it.

As the testimony has strongly demonstrated, Connecticut gun owners are rational, factual and reasonable. The testimony has also strongly demonstrated that those pushing these new restrictive laws are generally asking for your votes on emotion. The battle cry for these new proposed bills is that one must, "think of the children." While I respect and understand their concerns for school safety I am shockingly dumbfounded as to how they feel any of the proposed legislation will actually keep our children safer. So legislators, certainly keep the children in your minds and hearts, but ask yourself when you vote, will this make the children safer?

**The high capacity magazine ban will be ineffective at keeping our children safer.** The criminals that plan these heinous attacks are calculated and the crimes they commit well planned. As with all school shootings the perpetrators have been able to reload at will. The shooter at Sandy Hook reloaded multiple times, many times not even reaching the bottom of his magazines and further he has taped multiple magazines together in an effort to reload quickly.<sup>1</sup> The Virginia Tech shooter carried a backpack filled with nineteen 10 and 15 rounds magazines.<sup>2</sup> The Columbine shooters carried thirteen 10-round magazines for one of their handguns.<sup>3</sup> The cold and calculated nature of such attacks allows the shooters to be well prepared. The law abiding citizen does not share such a luxury. This ban, as will become a consistent theme, will only harm the law abiding, not the criminals.

**The new Assault Weapon Ban will be ineffective at keeping our children safer.** We already have an assault weapon ban in CT. Although not widely reported, the AR-15 used in the Sandy Hook shootings, by our own laws, was not an assault weapon.<sup>4</sup> Many have long stated these bans are ineffective, much to the mockery of those that support them. Now when presented with the tragic reality the ban did nothing to keep our children safer, instead of recognizing their folly, they only wish to strengthen the ban. Will adding one more "feature" truly keep our children safer? Will a different form of grip really impact these shootings? That is what you are being asked to pass. Have we maybe been focused on the wrong issue all along?

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/9749157/Connecticut-school-shooting-Adam-Lanza-rigged-rifle-for-maximum-damage.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/TempContent/techPanelReport.cfm>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.state.co.us/columbine/Columbine\\_20Report\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.state.co.us/columbine/Columbine_20Report_WEB.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.jud.ct.gov/JI/criminal/glossary/assaultweapon.htm>

**The 50% tax on ammunition will be ineffective at keeping our children safer.** This one is very clear-cut, so I will keep it simple. Hunters, sportsmen and those defending their families practice with thousands of rounds a year. A school shooter will use less than 200 rounds of ammunition. Those rounds commonly cost less than \$0.50.<sup>5</sup> Would a \$50 tax really keep our children safer? Or is this new legislation aimed at regular law abiding gun owners?

As I hope I have demonstrated these proposed legislations have little correlation with their ability to protect our children. So maybe it is time to move past the rhetoric of “think of the children” when you are asked to vote on the proposed legislation. As these proposed legislations go forward, I have no doubt that as fact and reason enter, the debate will shift towards that thought that these are bills aimed at preventing overall crime. So allow me to quickly evaluate the impact these above bills would have on everyday crime.

**The high capacity magazine ban will do nothing to prevent every day gun crime.** There is neither fact nor logic that supports a ban be effective in addressing regular gun crime. The vast majority of gun crimes, according to the FBI are committed with handguns containing less than 10 rounds. Few crimes are committed with magazines carrying more than 10 rounds. The majority of the guns with magazines over 10 rounds on the streets daily are in the hands of police officers and those licensed to carry. For those guns, a magazine over 10 rounds is standard capacity, for the cheap disposable pistols used by criminals; a magazine under 10 rounds is standard capacity. It is important to note that this type of legislation has long been ignored by the criminals in their commissions of crimes. So will this legislation really keep our streets safer? Are our homes safer?

**Strengthening the assault weapon ban will do nothing to prevent every day gun crime.** The Assault Weapon Ban, as we already have in place, was shown to have had a statistically insignificant impact on crime federally when in place on a national level.<sup>6</sup> Further, assault weapons are used in less than 2% of gun crimes<sup>7</sup>, so clearly this is not about addressing the majority of gun crime. But alas, we already have this bill in place. Do you, as legislator truly believe that removing one more ‘feature’ from a rifle will change the impact of this legislation that has already been demonstrated to be ineffective?

**The 50% tax on ammunition will do nothing to prevent every day gun crime.** This bill will mainly limit the amount of practice a law abiding gun owner can afford. It is not uncommon for a gun owner to shoot 300-1000+ rounds in a single trip to the range. There is not possible rhyme or reason as to how this legislation could in any way help to prevent crime. Criminals do not take weekly trips to the range nor do they tend to obtain their guns or ammunition or firearms legally. This proposed legislation is solely aimed at reducing the sporting culture around firearms; it’s long term goals: unknown.

CT already has the 5<sup>th</sup> strongest gun laws in the nation.<sup>8</sup> How far do you plan do go as legislators before you realize that we have gone far enough or possibly too far? Maybe it is time to recognize, if you do care about the children, the gun victims, and the gun owners that we have been focusing on the wrong legislation from the beginning. I recognize that many pundits like to point to our state as having a low

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<sup>5</sup> <http://gun-deals.com/ammo.php?caliber=.223%2F5.56> Note: the prices are inflated due to demand, but still hover around \$0.50. Previously it was around \$0.35.

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.sas.upenn.edu/jerrylee/research/aw\\_final2004.pdf](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/jerrylee/research/aw_final2004.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <http://washingtonexaminer.com/crs-under-2-percent-of-gun-crimes-involve-assault-weapons/article/2516512>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bradycampaign.org/stategunlaws/scorecard/CT>

homicide rate; however what they conveniently leave out is that there is no statistical correlation, either positive or negative, between gun control and the homicide rate (or firearm homicide rate) when evaluated state by state.<sup>9</sup> In a larger study, conducted by Harvard, there was gain no correlation between a country's gun control and their murder or suicide rate.<sup>10</sup> The facts and research are all aligned in regard to the proposed legislation.

As responsible and intelligent legislators I hope you will look at the clear and simple facts as they relate to the proposed legislation and vote no.

Sincerely and respectfully,  
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<sup>9</sup> <http://thisainthell.us/blog/?p=30444>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlpp/Vol30\\_No2\\_KatesMauseronline.pdf](http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlpp/Vol30_No2_KatesMauseronline.pdf)