

To all concerned:

A firearm and in particular a modern sporting rifle is an inanimate object which by itself is incapable of inflicting any type of harm whatsoever. However in the hands of a criminal or a mentally disturbed/ill individual intent on causing harm, who by the way will not follow any laws that are passed, any type of firearm or any other means of causing harm (i.e. knife, car, explosive, etc.) can be used to inflict such harm. As such, any legislation proposed in the aftermath of the events in Newtown should be focused on the individual, on the mental health industry and detention centers of the state and their ability to identify, detain and provide the necessary treatment to the criminals and mentally disturbed/ill so they cannot pose a threat to society.

Modern sporting rifles are no different in their operation than traditional auto-loading hunting rifles. Modern sporting rifles use the same caliber bullets and detachable magazines just like the auto-loading hunting rifles. Both the modern sporting rifles and the auto-loading hunting rifles are semi-automatic and only fire a single shot each time the trigger is pulled. In their operation, when a bullet is fired in both the modern sporting rifles and the auto-loading hunting rifles gas pushes on the bolt carrier, either directly or through a piston system, to move the bolt carrier backwards to unlock the bolt and eject the empty shell casing. Both the modern sporting rifles and the hunting rifles have a buffer/recoil spring located either in front of or behind the bolt carrier to reduce felt recoil and return the bolt carrier and bolt to their forward operating position. During forward movement of the bolt carrier a new round is removed from the magazine and loaded into the chamber. Modern sporting rifles are one of the most popular style rifles on the market today and appear to be targeted merely because of the way they look as their function is the same as auto-loading hunting rifles.

With respect to the pistol grip on modern sporting rifles this does not make the rifle any more dangerous than a traditional single shot, bolt action or auto-loading hunting rifle. For example, traditional target and hunting rifles come with or can be equipped with a thumbhole style or similar stock which essentially provides a "pistol grip" type of hold for the shooter to increase the shooter's comfort and provide greater trigger control which may prevent accidental discharges (just look at the rifles used in the olympics as an example). Separating the pistol grip from the stock as on the modern sporting rifles is merely a matter of aesthetics and decreases manufacturing costs by decreasing the amount of materials used in production of the stock.

Further, with respect to banning large capacity magazines who is to decide what a large capacity magazine is? Why would it be okay to carry 7 or 10 bullets but not more when each bullet is capable of harm in the hands of a

depraved individual? These proposed laws simply do not make sense and clearly would not serve the alleged intended purpose of decreasing violence. With practice any magazine or other feeding device of a firearm can be changed rapidly making one magazine that holds x number of rounds essentially no different than having two or three or more magazines that hold a lesser number of rounds. A law banning large capacity feeding devices and/or modern sporting rifles would serve absolutely no purpose and have absolutely no effect on stopping events like the one that occurred in Newtown especially when the individuals committing these acts have a complete disregard for life and the law.

In addition, the laws being proposed to ban the use and possession of large capacity magazines and modern sporting rifles, if passed, would have a detrimental monetary impact on myself and many others in the shooting sports community. In essence these proposed laws would require us to destroy or sell at a great loss all of the equipment we currently use and then reinvest in whatever equipment that satisfies the requirements of the proposed laws. This seems unjust (and may be akin to an unlawful taking of property) especially when a magazine, which for example costs \$50.00 or a rifle that costs several thousands of dollars cannot be sold because it suddenly becomes illegal and rendered useless as a result of the passage of the proposed bills. Now compound this monetary loss when one owns multiple firearms having magazines or other feeding devices that hold more than 10 rounds where each firearm has multiple feeding devices. The detrimental monetary affect of these proposed laws on individuals can be in the thousands if not tens of thousands of dollars.

Any new laws limiting the possession or use of firearms and their feeding devices should not be passed and will have absolutely no impact whatsoever on stopping a criminal or mentally disturbed/ill individual (who will have total disregard for the law and any laws passed) from inflicting harm. The root cause of the problem (i.e. identification of the mentally disturbed, access to mental health care and detention if necessary) must be addressed to have any impact on saving lives such as those lost in Newtown.

In addition parental involvement and child discipline appears to be another thing that is lacking in today's society. Children (i.e. individuals under 18 years of age) seem to do whatever they want with no fear of any consequences. They are taught by our schools to pick up the phone and dial 911 the moment a parent attempts to discipline them. How is this a benefit to society? This type of attitude disincentives parents from disciplining their children in an attempt to make their children better individuals because the parents fear the state will take their children away or they themselves will be punished by town

or state officials. Moreover, if a child or even adult does something wrong or illegal in today's society it is never the individual's fault, the blame is always placed on the means used to achieve the individual's goal or on something else entirely. Even if an individual is arrested for a crime they are likely back out on the streets in a matter of hours or days without any type of mental evaluation whatsoever. These are the types of things that must be addressed if events like those that occurred in Newtown are to be prevented.

The anti-gun legislation currently being proposed accomplishes only one thing and that is to punish law abiding gun owners for the acts of one mentally disturbed individual and nothing else.

Best regards,  
William Knotts  
799 Thompson Street  
East Haven, CT 06513