

Hello,

I am here tonight as a husband and a parent. My wife and I have 2 children and are currently expecting our third; it is for our children that I am here tonight.

We are hearing the phrase “for our children” a lot after the terrible events here last month. Yet it seems that too many parents are shirking their responsibility of taking care of their children, and are instead looking to make the government do something about their child's safety instead. And in their haste in calling for government action on all levels, they are failing to see the end result, which is a more dangerous future, with fewer freedoms.

I am not here to support the 2nd amendment of the constitution tonight. Instead, I am here to support the whole constitution. The same constitution that gives everyone in this room the right to decide for themselves to own a firearm or not. The same constitution that gives them the very right they are using today to have free speech, and the right to assemble.

I cannot ever imagine suffering the loss that some people have gone thru in this community. But I am at a loss to explain how devastating it is to see people seemingly throwing away our constitution. My family follows that constitution. I have brothers who fought overseas to defend it. It is not a piece of paper to follow when we wish, but a list of inalienable rights to be followed and revered.

I said I am here for my children. And I am. Because I am worried what will come next year, or in 5 years, or in 10. If the acts of a criminal can get so many people to demonize law abiding citizens whose only fault in their eyes is that they have chosen to exercise their 2nd amendment, what other amendment will you choose to rip from people's freedom next? Because while I fervently hope that no other horrible shooting takes place, we all know that no amount of laws will stop another one from happening. So when the 2nd amendment is governed to near extinction, what will people beg for the government to do then?

Should our children also never live in a country where their 4th amendment rights are intact? Should invasive and un-warranted searches be the normal way of life for them? Isn't the right to vote an extension of our right to free speech? Will our children be persecuted for speaking out against public officials? We have reached a point in our country's existence that we may never see again if we continue to ask the government to step in and create new laws. Laws that only target law abiding citizens. No law stops a criminal from their criminal act. Laws let citizens

know what moral ground to take. Laws are what separate us from the criminals. Asking our government, at any level, to create new laws that will take rights away from a citizen in an emotional, knee-jerk response is not how laws should be made.

If we continue down the path that is being asked of our government right now, what kind of country will our children inherit? Isn't a 20 trillion dollar debt enough? Do we need to hand them a country that has decided to violate their rights? How will we answer when they ask us why we let the government strip away their freedoms while they were children, when we as parents were supposed to be taking care of them?

My wife and I have told our oldest child that we will fight for the constitution of these great states. My parents, and my siblings will not bow down to any more oppression from a government that does not follow the constitution. And no parent here should want his or her child to grow up in a country that used to be free. If we hand our children a country without the freedoms afforded to us by the constitution, than we have failed. If we dismantle the constitution in any way, we will have failed our children, we will be spitting on the graves of all soldiers who did not come home alive, and we will be turning our backs on the troops we so luckily have fighting for us now. If there was ever a time to rally behind the constitution once again, this is it.

Thank you for allowing me to be heard,

Christopher Duffy