



**TESTIMONY OF  
CHIEF DOUGLAS S. FUCHS  
REDDING POLICE DEPARTMENT**



BEFORE  
**THE CONNECTICUT BIPARTISAN TASK FORCE ON GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND CHILDREN'S SAFETY  
NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT HIGH SCHOOL  
JANUARY 30, 2013**

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GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS DOUGLAS FUCHS.

I HAVE BEEN A POLICE OFFICER FOR 24 YEARS.

I AM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT OF THE CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION.

I STAND BEFORE YOU THIS EVENING AS:

- THE CHIEF OF POLICE OF THE REDDING POLICE DEPARTMENT, A DIRECT NEIGHBOR TO THE TOWN OF NEWTOWN,
- A RESIDENT OF THE TOWN OF NEWTOWN,
- AND ONE WHOSE CHILDREN ATTENDED THE SANDY HOOK SCHOOL

THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 14, 2012 AT ABOUT 9:30 I WAS IN MY UNMARKED POLICE CAR LEAVING THE TOWN OF REDDING AND HEADING TO THE HARTFORD REGION FOR A MEETING. AS I REACHED THE NEWTOWN TOWN LINE I BEGAN TO HEAR RADIO TRANSMISSIONS – YOU SEE – FOR YEARS NOW – OUR TWO DEPARTMENTS HAVE WORKED TOGETHER AND HAVE EACH OTHER'S RADIO FREQUENCIES PROGRAMMED INTO ALL OF OUR RADIOS – THESE TRANSMISSIONS APPEARED TO INVOLVE WHAT WE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT CALL AN ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE TO A SCHOOL. WHILE I DID NOT KNOW TO WHICH SCHOOL THE NEWTOWN POLICE HAD RESPONDED – AS I DID NOT HEAR THE ORIGINAL DISPATCH – IT WAS READILY APPARENT THAT MY FELLOW POLICE OFFICERS IN NEWTOWN WERE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE CLEARING OF ONE OF THEIR SCHOOLS IN RESPONSE TO AN INVASION OF SORTS.

BEFORE 9:45 THAT MORNING I FOUND MYSELF, ALONG WITH TWO OTHER REDDING POLICE OFFICERS AND REDDING EMS STANDING IN THE PARKING LOT OF THE SANDY HOOK SCHOOL. WHAT TRANSPIRED DURING THE COURSE OF THE NEXT MANY HOURS, MANY DAYS, AND MANY WEEKS – AND THE TASKS PERFORMED AND VISIONS OBSERVED - I HAVE A FEELING – MY BRAIN (ALONG WITH MANY OTHERS) WILL NEVER, AND I SUPPOSE THANKFULLY, PROPERLY PROCESS.

SO I STAND BEFORE YOU WITH 6 FAIRLY SIMPLE REQUESTS – 6 REQUESTS – 1 FOR EACH OF THOSE CIVILIAN FIRST RESPONDER HEROES – OUR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS - WHO DID EVERYTHING IMAGINABLE TO TRY AND SAVE 20 OF OUR CHILDREN.

- 1) **BAN HIGH CAPACITY MAGAZINES** TO EVERYONE BUT LAW ENFORCEMENT. NO ONE HAS YET TO MAKE A COGENT ARGUMENT AS TO WHY ANYONE OTHER THAN A POLICE OFFICER (OR MILITARY) NEEDS THE ABILITY TO FIRE SO MANY BULLETS WITHOUT RELOADING.
- 2) **RESTRICT ASSAULT RIFLES TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.** I AM NOT AN AVID MARKSMAN BUT AM TOLD THAT THEY ARE FUN TO SHOOT. I GET THAT – BUT MANY WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THEIR FERRARI OUT AT 3AM AND DRIVE 140MPH ON I-84 – BUT WE DON'T LET THEM. THEY MIGHT BE A VERY ACCOMPLISHED DRIVER, THE TRAFFIC VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT, AND THEIR VEHICLE – A FINELY TUNED MACHINE – BUT FOR SOME REASON THE CONNECTICUT LEGISLATURE FROWNS UPON THAT ACTIVITY. I AM ALSO TOLD THAT SOME HUNT WITH THESE TYPES OF RIFLES. AS A MATTER OF FACT, JUST LAST WEEK A FIREARMS TRANSFER SLIP CROSSED MY DESK TO NOTIFY ME OF THE SALE OF A BUSHMASTER AR-15 ASSAULT RIFLE TO ONE OF MY RESIDENTS – PURCHASED WITH THEIR HUNTING LICENSE –NOT EVEN A FIREARMS LICENSE.
- 3) **GIVE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH RECORDS** TO THOSE TASKED WITH ISSUING FIREARMS PERMITS. OUR ONLY CHECK CURRENTLY IS ACCOMPLISHED WHEN THE APPLICANT CHECKS NO TO THE QUESTION POSED ON THEIR APPLICATION.
- 4) **GIVE POLICE CHIEFS GREATER LATITUDE IN DENYING PISTOL PERMIT APPLICATIONS FOR CAUSE.** WHEN I DENIED A PISTOL PERMIT TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO PERJURED HIMSELF ON THE APPLICATION – RELATIVE TO A PRIOR CRIMINAL ARREST RECORD – I WAS TOLD BY THE BOARD OF FIREARMS PERMIT EXAMINERS TO ARREST HIM FOR PERJURY AND TO ISSUE THE PERMIT AS, EVEN THOUGH HE LIED ABOUT IT, THE ARREST WAS NOT A DISQUALIFYING OFFENSE.
- 5) REQUIRE ALL FIREARMS – HAND AND LONG GUNS – **TO BE SECURED** – AND BY SECURED – I MEAN SECURED – NOT BY MEANS OF A \$3 LOCK WHICH A PAIR OF PLIERS CAN EASILY DEFEAT.
- 6) AND 6 – GIVE CONNECTICUT LAW ENFORCEMENT THE TOOLS WITH WHICH TO BEST PROTECT OUR RESIDENTS:
  - A) ENACT TOUGHER SENTENCES FOR THOSE WHO VIOLATE GUN LAWS – OUR POLICE OFFICERS ON DAILY BASIS PLACE THEMSELVES IN HARM'S WAY TO RECOVER ILLEGAL WEAPONS ONLY TO FIND THE VIOLATOR BACK ON THE STREETS FAR TOO QUICKLY,
  - B) GIVE EVERY POLICE OFFICER STATEWIDE ARREST AUTHORITY FOR ALL VIOLATIONS OF LAW – NOT JUST FELONIES. OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE TO NEWTOWN WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE A GREAT DEAL EASIER IF ALL OFFICERS WHO RESPONDED WERE SO EMPOWERED.

I WILL CLOSE IN MUCH THE SAME MANNER AS I BEGAN – ON DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup> I STOOD ON THE GROUNDS OF THE SCHOOL WHICH SHARES THE NAME OF THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH I LIVE AND IS NOW SYNONYMOUS WITH WHAT IS ARGUABLY THE GREATEST NATIONAL HUMAN TRAGEDY OF OUR GENERATION. I IMPLOR YOU TO TURN THAT LOCAL TRAGEDY INTO AN OPPORTUNITY.

I THANK YOU.