

January 29, 2013

**The Bipartisan Task Force  
On Gun Violence Protection And Children's Safety:  
Members of the Gun Violence Protection and  
Mental Health Services Work Groups**

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Task Force:

First, I wish to express my sincere condolences to all who have been so tragically affected by the sorrowful and senseless murders in Sandy Hook. As a father of six, the thought of losing one of my children is simply incomprehensible. I also acknowledge your honorable efforts to enhance the safety of our public schools. I simply ask that the task force consider some of my thoughts during your deliberations.

Approximately 30+ years ago during my high school and college years, it was quite common for young boys and men to regularly hunt and target practice with guns. Of course, the second amendment does not make reference to hunting and target practice, rather to the right to self defense and security of and from the State. Prior to the 1990's, there were minimal laws placing restrictions on a citizen's right to own and bear guns. During that general period, I do not recall hearing of any gun violence in the schools. It is only in the last 20 or so years (starting in the late 1990's) when such phenomena began to flare up. Please understand that I am not adverse to reasonable and constitutional legislation pertaining to gun safety. For example, I can accept more rigorous background checks, increased scrutiny of persons with criminal histories and violent psychiatric disorders and enhanced data sharing between law enforcement agencies. Clearly, the establishment of stricter gun laws in the last two decades appear to have done little, if anything to curtail gun violence. We currently have the strictest gun control laws in our nation's history, yet the violence continues unabated. In fact, each act like Columbine, Virginia Tech and Sandy Hook seem to get increasingly worse as though each offender is trying to outdo the previous ones. The perpetrators appear to have some common traits: all young males, psychological disorders, isolated personalities, and potentially medicinal or controlled drug use. We must examine the conditions that have changed in our society in the past 20 or so years that have made such violent acts acceptable behavior to such persons. I believe that part of the solution must include increased protections for the society from those with violent criminal histories and violent mental disorders.

In a broader perspective over the last couple of decades, many American families have become dysfunctional, objective morality has become a thing of the past and life itself has largely been deemed worthless, unless one has utility to the State or big corporations. The psychological effects on our children, particularly on adolescent boys and young men have been devastating. Such disordered perceptions and conditions are ominously similar to the those that the greatest generation fought and

died to protect the West from during WWII. Until we acknowledge that the present trend of unspeakable violence is essentially rooted in this cultural disorder and we begin to address it as such, all the laws that can be created will not stop these heinous acts no matter what the weapon of choice happens to be. To avoid a thorough study of the cultural and social issues from which to develop meaningful solutions will be counterproductive to your difficult task and to the citizens of Connecticut.

Thank you and respectfully yours;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Bear". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Bear" clearly distinguishable.

John J. Bear  
36 Loomis Road  
Colchester, CT 06415