

Honorable Task Force Members,

I am deeply hurt and saddened by what happened in Sandy Hook. Normally I would never contact anyone about this, but I have personal experience with a family member with mental health issues and I am a firearms owner.

It is important for everyone to focus on the two issues both pro and anti gun people can agree on. Keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and keeping guns away from people with mental health issues. Banning so called high capacity magazines and assault weapon firearms is just not going to work. Tougher penalties for criminals who use firearms in the commission of a crime and building a strong mental health system which can really help mentally ill people are the only way to reduce gun violence. I hope all of you watched the PBS documentaries this past week, they were all extremely informative.

The state of mental health care in the US and CT is miserable. Once a person reaches 18, the parents can not get a person help unless the mentally ill person asks for it. I know this first hand since my brother has mental health issues and got into trouble with a firearm. I remember when my cousin first called me. I thought for sure my brother or someone else was dead. Luckily in my case no one was hurt and I hoped the incident would force my brother to get help. Well I was wrong. The prison he was sent to would not diagnose him and the State of CT probation office wouldn't help either. Even though a judge ordered my brother to get mental health care. So after everything that happened my brother still has not been helped. This has got to change.

Also I know this is not a popular topic, but there has to be something done about the horrific amount of violence which is currently portrayed in computer games. These games desensitize people to extreme violence and are in no way representative of owning or safely handling and firing an actual firearm. I liken the violence in these game to pornography, and some of the latest games are XXX and have no place being played by youngsters. You should all personally take a look at some of the most violent of these games you will be shocked I guarantee it.

The decisions you have to make on all these issues are not going to be easy, but please try to weight all the factors before you blindly write new laws. Please no not just react like New York did. There is common ground here, no one wants criminals or mentally ill people to have firearms. This is what you need to focus on, not a quick gun and magazine ban which ultimately will not help or protect anyone. Please try to find a way to make our mental health system work again.

Thank you for your consideration,

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