

My Name is Kim Shine and I live in Newtown, CT

Sadly, I would like to submit my input on the issues before us as a result of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. I am submitting to all three working groups since my concerns and ideas address all three.

First, since the State of Connecticut already has some of the strictest laws on the books for firearm licensing, I only see one change to those laws which could possibly have changed the outcome of the shooting. That is requiring a firearm owner, regardless of the type of firearm, to obtain a combination safe to house their firearms. Had the permit holder kept her firearms in a safe and not readily accessible to her son, we may have had a different outcome, although I don't think this would have prevented the shooting entirely. It's obvious that the shooter had well planned his actions in advance and could easily have obtained an illegal weapon. As a matter of fact, had his mother not owned firearms, it would have been easier for him to obtain them illegally, rather than legally. This further supports my stand that changing the existing laws is not the answer. Had the mother locked her firearms in a safe, he would have had to somehow break open that safe to obtain possession of them. If the safe was sturdy enough and had to be blown open with some kind of explosive, chances are the contents may be damaged and not useful, and/or someone would have heard an explosion and notified law enforcement.

I consider myself a "realist" and feel there are only a few things that could have changed what happened here, the first of which is described above. I think where we truly failed as a state, a community, and a school system, is that this boy was not identified and committed to an institution prior to his committing such a heinous crime. As a child going through our school system, it is my feeling and understanding the shooter fit the profile of one who would do something like this. Had we identified him and gotten him the help he needed or had him committed, maybe that would have prevented what happened. We are just too cowardly to "identify" people for fear of being sued for discrimination or for fear of being "politically incorrect". Instead, we put the lives of so many innocents at risk every day across our country. Not just in our schools, but in any public gathering place in our nation. We need to have laws on the books to identify disturbed individuals as children going through our school systems. The signs were there for this shooter, and I'm pretty confident the signs are always there.

Last, they say "the only thing that will stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun". I'm sure we're all in agreement we do not want to have to resort to arming school personnel, but we DO need to provide a safe environment for our children. Perhaps we should start with arming our school personnel with tasers? This would at least stop any shooter long enough for law enforcement to arrive. Also, if I understand correctly and the shooter did in fact go to the high school first and left either because a security guard turned him away, or because there was a police presence there, then to have armed security outside the school building would be a tremendous deterrent.

If we are going to change any laws or implement new ones, to do something for the sake of saying "we did something" is not the answer. We need to do something that will actually make a difference.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Kim Shine