

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Date: April 7, 2013

Sub: Senate Bills 700, 347, 699 and 796.

I would like to state that I am in support of all four of these bills. At the same time, I would also like to say that while these bills are good start in the right direction, they don't go far enough. I am in support of requiring accountability for gun ownership in the form of insurance. Gun owners need to be accountable if their firearms get in the hands of others who are not authorized to use them. Also, I am in support of total ban on assault weapons.

There were more presenters at the hearing on Friday who were against these measures than those who supported them. But a overwhelming majority of voting population supports these measures and more stricter regulations. As elected officials I urge you to act according to the wishes of the majority of population.

Gun lobby puts forth one line arguments that have no basis, but every other speaker who is against these four bills, keeps repeating the same lines without giving any supporting facts. Some of these arguments are as follows:

1. "Existing laws are adequate":
I would urge the senators on the committee to confront such arguments and ask the presenters which laws they are talking about. Which law could have prevented the tragedy at Sandy Brook School?
2. "Spend more money on Mental Health care":
One Psychiatrist at the hearing earlier during the hearing said that Mental Science has not yet developed to the point that they can identify someone who is likely to commit mass murder ahead of time. Furthermore, even if they can get an idea of a likely future mass murderer, under our system of law, no action can be taken against the person unless an act has been committed. So, a more practical way is to restrict availability of weapons to unstable individuals.
3. "These bills will do nothing but target law abiding citizens":
Such arguments were put forth by many speakers on Friday, but no one came forward with any statistics to back them.

4. There is a commercial by gun lobby that comes on business radio AM1410 very often. It says essentially says that if guns need to be restricted, then should also be high powered cars that have large engines “to keep the speed at 150 miles per hour”. If the gun lobby truly supports this argument then they should realize that such cars are taxed and required to be registered and insured. If they get into accidents, the owner is responsible for the damages. In keeping with the comparison, will gun lobby accept the guns to be registered and insured, that will make the owner accountable if they are misused?

Thanks for giving me the chance to present my views.

Sincerely,

Hemendra Mathur
Citizen's Coalition for Social Justice