

Texas House Select Committee on Mass Violence Prevention & Community Safety

Duty 4

Dear Representatives,

My name is Stephen Jewell, I reside in Santa Fe, TX. As a concerned citizen and father of a child who was in Santa Fe High School during the shooting on May 18, 2018 I am glad to see some work being done on this issue. Mass Violence has become a problem for Texas as well as all of America and we should try to determine what has caused this cultural change.

In discussing this topic it always seems that the conversation tends toward Mental Health and Gun Control. While I understand that a person with certain mental health issues and behavior problems should not be allowed to possess a firearm we cannot allow any mental health policies to be used as a means toward more gun control legislation. "Red Flag" laws such as those adopted by other States have been misused and abused and have done nothing to improve the mental health of those in need. Laws such as these that allow the confiscation of firearms often have done nothing more than strip a person or their family of their property and their right to protect themselves. Texas must be careful about simply adopting such laws and saying it's for improving mental health and preventing mass violence.

I understand the importance of this Select Committee and the difficulty you will have in finding ways to prevent Mass Violence and improve Community Safety but I feel it must be done without more gun control laws. More gun control legislation will only make it more difficult for law abiding citizens to protect themselves and their loved ones. I think most Texans value their right to bear arms and I think most Texans understand that no number or type of law can keep them safe from every possible danger. As an individual with the rights afforded to me by the State of Texas I accept that my personal safety is mostly my responsibility and as a born and raised Texan I wouldn't want it any other way.

I thank you for this opportunity to offer my opinion, I hope for the best solution for Texas.

Thank You,

Stephen Jewell