

To: TX House Committee on Mass  
Violence & Community Safety

Richard Hanson's, public comment:

It is my understanding the committee is determined to deal with this topic in a positive, data driven manner. This is much appreciated. Violent crime has been decreasing, although high profile incidents cry out for objective analysis. The present increase in urban violence is due to factors beyond the scope of the committee and this commentary. Dr. John Lott, the Crime Prevention Research Center is considered to be the gold standard of analysis ([crimeresearch.org](http://crimeresearch.org)). Although particular individuals and organizations disparage Dr. Lott personally and professionally; the validity of CPRC's research seems consistent and objective. He is an economist with an impeccable academic background and has won many awards. Quite simply, numbers are crunched and conclusions are drawn. Sources, methods and data are posted for all to see.

There is a clear difference between the law abiding and the criminal. The law abiding have proven incredibly consistent and dependable in doing so. Criminals have proven to be equally consistent in that laws are irrelevant to them. First, they must be caught, then prosecuted. We know the justice system is not consistent in who is prosecuted and for what crime. In fact, almost no one is prosecuted for the crime committed, but for a lesser one.

May I suggest:

1. Consistently enforce all laws presently on the books. Where deadly force is a factor, there should be no plea bargain.
2. Prevent crime by community policing using the "broken window" concept while closely monitoring known bad actors. Modern law enforcement is quite effective when allowed to function properly.
3. There should be an inherent risk associated with victim selection, i.e. Constitutional carry.
4. There should be an inherent risk associated with the selection of a location where a crime is to be committed, i.e. eliminate "gun free" zones.
5. Private businesses and corporations should be allowed to determine if firearms are allowed. They should, then, assume responsibility for the safety of their patrons and be accountable according to the principles of tort law.
6. Red Flag laws are far too easy to abuse. Universal background checks are impossible to enforce. These actions would be burdensome only to law abiding citizens.
7. I believe the mental health issue can be handled by straightforward adjustments to current law, and common-sense improvements to support infrastructure. I do not know enough to comment further on this aspect.

Citizens should be free to live and care for their families as they see fit. They should not fear criminals or their elected government. Criminals need to be concerned about both.

Thank you.

Richard Hanson, citizen