Thank you for permitting me the opportunity of speaking.

My name is Alan Kasper and I am the President of the Bainbridge Island Sportsmen's Club. I wish to speak of the Sandy Hook elementary school shooting and topics related to that tragedy. As a father and a grandfather of school age children the tragedy broke my heart. In the aftermath the very natural question asked is what can be done to prevent such a tragedy from happening again? The government in Washington DC offered up a number of items including the reinstatement of the assault style firearm and high capacity magazine ban. Truly that is old news. We tried that once before. A Washington Post article quoting a study done by the University of Pennsylvania relating to the assault style ban concluded that: "… there has been no discernible reduction in the lethality and injuriousness of gun violence."

History tends to repeat itself and so I ask you, why reinstate the ban when history has shown us the result is almost certainly: no discernible reduction in the lethality and injuriousness of gun violence?

Let's turn our attention to Bainbridge Island. As you know the City Council is considering a non-binding resolution for the purposes of, what appears to be, an affirmation to the current administration's plans to restrict gun ownership here in the United States. As I understand it some members of the Council represented or implied this position as a unified front of the opinion of all citizens on Bainbridge Island. This just isn't the case. And not only is this not the case but the policy itself is bad policy.

I should point out that I personally do not own an assault style firearm nor do I own any firearms with large capacity magazines so I am not protecting my personal interests. What I am talking about is efficacy and positive outcomes. We are here to discuss ways of protecting children not disarming law abiding citizens.

If we as a community wanted to stake a claim of position on this matter I believe that we should do it as a community not merely out of the desire on the part of a small number of people who want to do "something." What this nation needs to do is the "right thing" not just "something."

So what is the right thing? I was interviewed at my home a few days ago by King 5, KOMO News. We spent over an hour talking. They asked that question. I answered that question but it didn't appear on the program due I presume to time constraints. Here is what I said:

- **Civil dialog.** We need to have a civil dialog amongst all stake holders. Even though it might be comforting to some to demonize gun owners as cranks and lunatics, it is important to understand that 50% of all households in the USA own at least one gun. We are not lunatics. The problem needs to be solved with us involved.
- **Background check for all transfers at gun shows.** All gun show firearms transfers need to go through a background check and ownership is denied to:
- Convicted felons

- People convicted of domestic assault or abuse

- Dishonorably discharged veterans from the military

- Illegal immigrants

- People under indictment for felony charges

- The mentally ill or insane

- People with outstanding misdemeanor or felony warrants

- **National database.** But to accomplish item two above we need a very accurate national database of:
- Convicted felons

- People convicted of domestic assault or abuse

- Dishonorably discharged veterans from the military

- Illegal immigrants

- People under indictment for felony charges

- The mentally ill or insane

- People with outstanding misdemeanor or felony warrants

    Unfortunately that doesn't exist. We need to build it.
- **Grifting the system**. Yearly thousands of individuals attempt to defraud the existing system wherein they attempt to buy a firearm even though they fall into categories defined as what I just read. However few (less than 100) prosecutions take place on a yearly basis. There needs to be a reckoning with the system.
- **Hollywood**. We also need to tone down Hollywood and game manufacturers in their quest to create the most vicious games and shows imaginable. A recent study conducted in England by The International Society for Research on Aggression (IRSA) concluded that that evidence shows that the consumption of media violence can act as a trigger for aggressive thoughts or feelings already stored.
- **Armed guards**. Oddly there is seemingly a great push back to the concept of armed guards in schools, yet my reading indicates that somewhere between ½ and ⅔ of all schools in the USA already have armed guards. Certainly there are security teams in every college and university. Instead of signs that say "Gun Free Zone" replace them with signs that read "Armed Guards Present."
- **Education**. Our country educated a generation of people on the evil of smoking. Develop a similar campaign educating the public that it is not cool to not kill your neighbor. That may sound silly but there are communities where solving problems with guns is common place. Perhaps we can reach some of those affected through education.
- **Mentally Ill**. Lastly we as a society need to have better management and treatment of mentally ill people that are at risk of injuring themselves and others.

In conclusion I will first state that I don't have all the answers but I think we have a start in what I wrote and we should as a country use this as a starting point for the civilized dialog. To that end I strongly recommend that the City Council reject the resolution as put forth for tonight's consideration. Moreover, there is also the question whether the Council should be spending their time on these matters when the solutions truly are far more global in nature than the council has jurisdiction. But if we as a community want to make a statement then let's have it reflect the whole community not just a portion of it and let's recommend policies that have a chance of making a difference rather than same-o, same-o tried and failed policies of the past.

Respectfully,

Alan Kasper
President
Bainbridge Sportsmen's Club