

Good Afternoon.

I'm Chief Adam Pillar from the Lancaster Police Department. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you.

In my 30 years of law enforcement at the Lancaster Police Department I've had a gun shoved in my face by an emotionally disturbed male threatening suicide. Another officer and I managed to disarm him after a 30 second fight for our lives. The gun was discharged in that struggle, but no one was hit. I've had 2 friends murdered with firearms. One on duty in 1993 and one while off duty in 2012. Randy Bartow, the off duty officer, was murdered by the estranged husband of a female friend. This law might have saved his life.

This past summer a close relative and a retired military veteran, committed suicide with a firearm. He had just gotten out of the hospital and was on a cocktail of medicines that may have altered mood. I heard the call over the radio. I had to help haul the mattress from the house and clean the carpet for his wife. There were no indications that he was contemplating suicide, if there were and this law was in place she would have had a process to protect her husband in the short term until his mental state stabilized.

Having prefaced this-I'm a gun guy. I firmly believe if the 2nd amendment. I want as many good guys with guns around as possible. I would not support this bill if it curtailed the rights of law abiding citizens. This bill is about taking weapons from those who should not own them and holding the small percentage of people that commit majority of the violent crime accountable.

There is due process in this bill. Taking weapons when they are not evidence or contraband is not new. Having a codified due process to do it is. Ask any old cops who worked in the 80's and 90's. We used to collect weapons constantly. We would respond to a domestic violence call or a person in crisis and when the subject in question had been removed from the situation, we would ask remaining family members about firearms and if they wanted us to take them. We considered it common sense police work. The owner would want the

weapons back, and they were referred to the municipal prosecutor's office. Weapons were almost always held for months or until the conclusion of the trial. Many of these people never asked for their weapons back.

Currently, if we respond to a domestic and a weapon was used to threaten a victim, we will only take that specific weapon. We will not take the safe full in the bedroom. We only take weapons that are evidence.

I can tell you that families have called my police department to collect weapons over safety concerns and have been turned away.

I can also tell you that parents and family members of heroin, fentanyl, and meth addicts call us looking for some type of intervention. Unless there is some evidence of an occurring crime when we contact that addicted person, they are told to contact a private attorney and probate court.

There is a woman in my jurisdiction that has been a victim or a suspect in 25 crimes since 2000. She has been admitted on a pink slip once in 2010. She has four separate OVI arrests since 1994. In 2014 the Lancaster Police Department was contacting her because her neighbor complained that she was looking into her windows and her children were afraid. This person answered the door with a pistol in her hand pointed toward the ground. Officers told her to put the weapon down and she placed it on the porch. She smelled heavily of alcohol. She lunged to grab the weapon as another officer picked it up and fell down. She then went back into the house. She would not come out of the house to speak with officers or open the door. We took that firearm, but had to return it to her. Since returning that pistol she has been arrested for attempted assault and assault. She has been intoxicated in every instance that we've dealt with her. Her case is a great example of someone this law would take a firearm from.

I also want to comment on the background check portion of this bill. Background checks are not mandated by this bill. Currently, if our department replaced our pistols with a new version, I could auction off the old weapons and sell them to the highest bidder with no questions asked. We don't do that. It defies common sense and it's not good policy. Even under this bill I could still do that. Under the

bill I would be held accountable should any of those weapons be used by someone who should not possess a weapon, but I could still do it. The provisions in the bill protect gun shows and private citizens. Our agency does occasionally get asked to run a background check on someone so a private seller can be satisfied that the buyer is ok. We have to decline those requests. We advise them to contact a local gun store to facilitate that sale. There are no “Mom and Pop” gun stores in Lancaster to do that right now.

Passing this law as proposed does not preclude making changes next year if a need or concern arises. To this date in 2019 the Lancaster Police Department has collected 60 firearms total for all things. This could be a found weapon, or a firearm used in a crime. For our town of 40,000 that’s a small percentage of people that this bill would actually affect.

I’m a gun guy. I want as many good guys with guns around as possible, but the Oregon District shooting in Dayton highlighted how that’s not enough. Dayton PD had a heroic response in 30 seconds. There were still 9 killed and 27 injured. Our department has devoted a lot of time and money for training to respond to an active shooter. I don’t think we’ll beat a 30 second response.

Thank you.