

# UTAH SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

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**Sheriff Rick Eldredge**  
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**Sheriff Brian Nielson**  
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**Sheriff Nathan Curtis**  
Sevier County

**Sheriff Jeff Merrell**  
Uintah County

**Sheriff Todd Bonner**  
Wasatch County

**Sheriff Cory Pulsipher**  
Washington County

**Sheriff Kurt Taylor**  
Wayne County

**Sheriff Terry Thompson**  
Weber County

17 January 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We, the elected sheriffs of Utah, like so many of our fellow Americans, are literally heartbroken for the loved ones of the murdered victims in Connecticut. As Utahans, we are not strangers to this kind of carnage—one of the latest being the 2007 Trolley Square murders wherein nine innocents were gunned down—five losing their lives.

We also recognize the scores of other recent domestic massacres, which have decimated countless honorable lives. As Americans, we value the sanctity of life. Furthermore, similar to our inspired Founders, we acknowledge our subservience to a higher power.

With the number of mass shootings America has endured, it is easy to demonize firearms; it is also foolish and prejudiced. Firearms are nothing more than instruments, valuable and potentially dangerous, but instruments nonetheless. Malevolent souls, like the criminals who commit mass murders, will always exploit valuable instruments in the pursuit of evil. As professional peace officers, if we understand nothing else, we understand this: *lawful violence must sometimes be employed to deter and stop criminal violence*. Consequently, the citizenry must continue its ability to keep and bear arms, including arms that adequately protect them from all types of illegality.

As your administration and Congress continue to grapple with the complex issue of firearm regulations, we pray that the Almighty will guide the People's Representatives collectively. For that reason, it is imperative this discussion be had in Congress, not silenced unilaterally by executive orders. As you deliberate, please remember the Founders of this great nation created the Constitution, and its accompanying Bill of Rights, in an effort to protect citizens from all forms of tyrannical subjugation.

We respect the Office of the President of the United States of America. But, make no mistake, as the duly-elected sheriffs of our respective counties, we will enforce the rights guaranteed to our citizens by the Constitution. No federal official will be permitted to descend upon our constituents and take from them what the Bill of Rights—in particular Amendment II—has given them. We, like you, swore a solemn oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, and we are prepared to trade our lives for the preservation of its traditional interpretation.

The Utah Sheriffs' Association