

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo,
Governor of the State of New York
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Governor Cuomo:

As a woman, I have a need to defend myself from assailants who would do me harm—and I have a right to do so found in the U.S. Constitution. The person to whom this letter is addressed has repeatedly affirmed my right to take steps to protect my body from assault after the fact. So, why, then, does New York State want to limit my ability to protect myself before an assault?

The right to keep and bear arms means something different to every person who chooses to exercise it. For some, it is the right to participate in sport—hunting, skeet and trap shooting, target practice. For others, it is the right to protect their communities. For me, though, it is a very personal right. **I need** the security that comes from the equalizing power of a personal defense weapon—and **I deserve** that security.

New York State's law is pretty clear: right there in the **Civil Rights Law, Article II, Section 4** it says, ***“the right of the people to keep and bear arms cannot be infringed.”*** Notice that here in New York, we enshrine the Second Amendment in our Civil Rights law. That's not a mistake. That's because too many times, the right to keep and bear arms has been the only thing that has protected women from rapists and minorities from violent bigots. In fact, a 1997 study by Florida State University criminologist Dr. Gary Kleck found that every day, 550 rapes and 1,100 murders are prevented by the intended victim being armed. *Aren't those lives worth defending?*

Of course, we women are also mothers and big sisters. We saw the massacre at Newtown, and we cried. At the same time, though, we have read stories about so many children dying playing on the sidewalk in their neighborhoods in big cities. **Why would New York want to limit our ability to protect our children? Why would New York limit the number of bullets we can fire to protect our loved ones, rather than place armed guards in all of our schools? Why would New York restrict my choice in self-defense firearms instead of letting me choose the protection that is right for me and my family?**

We live in a violent, frightening world. Limiting my ability to protect my body, and my family, makes New York a safer state for criminals, and a very dangerous place for the law-abiding.

Disarming me, and other law-abiding women, will not make us, our neighborhoods, or our children safer. Repeal this bad law, and let's work together to make New York **truly** safe.

Sincerely,

Name

Street Address

City, State ZIP