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It is time to end Gun-Free Zones

It was about 20 minutes into the 7:00 p.m. showing of “Trainwreck” when moviegoers heard a couple of pops, like a sound effect glitch.

However, when the sounds rang out again it became horribly clear that this was something else entirely. Soon two young women lay fatally shot, nine other people were wounded, and with that, on July 23rd of this year, Lafayette, which boasts of being the happiest city in the country, joined Chattanooga, Tenn.; Charleston, S.C.; Aurora, Colo.; Newtown, Conn., and so many others on the long list of cities scarred by a person with violent intentions. The gunman, John Russell Houser, became yet another figure in a gallery of angry people with weapons who walked into a movie theater, a church, a school or a workplace and shattered the lives of people there. What all these venues had in common; they were gun-free zones, where law abiding citizens were prohibited from having a weapon with which they could defend themselves.

Recently, in what now appears to be another Islamic terrorist attack, a shooter methodically executed Christians at Umpqua Community College in southern Oregon murdering 10 and injuring 7 more defenseless people before he was neutralized. Because it was a gun-free zone, none of the victims or anyone in the immediate area had a weapon to defend themselves. In a similarly situation, in 2009, a Muslim terrorist, Major Nidal Hasan, killed 13 people in a gun-free zone on a military base in Texas.

It is no accident that mass murderers, time and time again, choose gun-free zones as their killing fields. Violent psychopaths don't want resistance. They don't want to be shot before they can wreak havoc. These killers want to make sure their targets are as soft and defenseless as possible. Gun-free zones assure they can have relative safety while they execute their defenseless victims.

The solution to gun violence is not gun control. Why? Because guns are mere tools, and the evil mind hell-bent on violence will use any tool at his disposal to effect it. History has proven that gun control actually increases violent crimes against people. Gun control takes guns away from law abiding citizens who only use them for defense. Criminals will always have access to guns because the lawless don't obey laws. You cannot change the human condition with a new law or two. In the face of evil, however, you can give innocent men and women the right to protect themselves. That, of course, is the rationale for the Second Amendment: we have a God-given right and obligation to protect ourselves, our families, and our neighbors.

Mandated gun-free zones nullify that right. They tell the individuals within their boundaries that they have a right to be victims, and nothing more. The continual mass shootings in gun-free zones do not send the message that we need more gun control. They show the exact opposite: that gun control simply doesn't work.

I find it incomprehensibly irresponsible that any university leader would oppose the God given right of individuals to defend themselves just because they are on a college. We should be applauding leaders like Chancellor John Sharp at Texas A&M University who has joined with the rational thinking leader around Texas recognizing the importance of personal responsibility and an individual's right to self-defense.

Too many people have died unnecessarily because of "gun-free zones". If people had been allowed to carry self-defense weapons in all of the above instances, many lives would still be here today. The hard truth is, people who establish and support "gun-free zones" are just as responsible for the deaths of those people killed, as are the killers. If we can hold General Motors criminally liable for deaths related to an ignition recall, then local municipalities should also be held responsible for deaths that occur in their designated "gun-free zones". **It is time to end gun free zones in Texas and embrace the ideas embedded in the 2nd Amendment; personal responsibility and self-defense.**

