Thank you for hearing my testimony today. My name is Madison Knoop, and I am a freshman at Johnson State College. I was in Middle school at the time of the Sandy Hook Massacre, in a town one over from Newtown.

9:35 a.m. Redding, CT.

I was walking through the hallway to my science teachers class room when the gunman shot through the doors of the school. I was in the next town over.

Dawn, Mary, and Natalie ran out to the hallway and screamed "Shooter! Stay put!". Dawn and Mary were then shot dead. I was opening the door to my classroom, the next town over. .

Lauren, the substitute teacher for the day, was trying to hide her students in the bathroom when he made his way into the room, killing her and 15 children, while I was picking up papers off my teachers desk, the next town over.

Victoria was trying to lock her classroom door when he barged in and killed her. I was leaving the classroom.

Jesse was screaming at his classmates to run when he was killed, while I was walking down the hallway

Ann was holding Dylan in her arms, trying to protect him, when they were both killed, while I was stepping back into the computer lab.

3 other children in Victoria's classroom were murdered while I was sitting back down.

9:40 am. The massacre ended when he shot himself in a 1st grade classroom while I was sitting in the computer lab, the next town over.

In 5 minutes, the gunman was able to murder 26 people. In the time it took me to walk to my teachers room and back, he murdered 26 people.

I remember my woodchop teacher telling me about his granddaughter. He was in the process of making her a train and he was so excited to give it to her. He had even just retired to spend more time with her.

She died that day.

Although I don't live in CT now, I am forever changed by this event.

After that day I was terrified to go to school. I even refused to go for a little. And, I'm still terrified. My community thought we were immune. What makes us think VT is? We are not safe. We learned this after the discovery of the journal of the student from Fair Haven, Vermont. Our schools aren't safe, our movie theaters aren't safe, our public spaces aren't safe. Why do we think we are immune?

It is true Universal Background Checks aren't going fix every issue. Passing them is a huge step in the process of working on the issue of gun violence. So far, they have stopped over 3 million people from getting guns.

With background checks, 47% fewer women are shot to death by intimate partners. Imagine how helpful this could be to women in VT as Vermont has 8th highest rate of women dying by domestic abuse in the nation, and two thirds of the death are by firearm.

48% less gun trafficking happens in states with background checks.Vt is the 20th in the country when it comes to gun trafficking. That is huge. People come from all around New England to buy guns in VT and bring them back home. Imagine how many crimes would have never had happened. Imagine how many people could have been saved from the horror of gun violence.

Vermont is ranked 15 in the nation for suicide and over half of those suicides are done with firearms. States with Universal Background checks suicide by gun rate is lowered by 53% and their suicide rate overall drops 31%.

According to VPR, 89% of Vermonters support background checks and 82% of Vermont gun owners support background checks.

Why are we putting our citizens in danger when we clearly want gun safety Bills? Why do we not have an assault weapons ban? We know the destruction they can do. We've seen it time and time again, after every mass shooting. Why?

Mass shootings in schools are not the only gun violence we have in Vt. today. We know Background checks have saved lives and I urge you to pass this Bill out of this committee.

I have had enough, my fellow students have had enough, and, I urge you to not put politics before our lives. We have had enough politics, and enough dead children, parents, aunts and uncles, sisters and brothers. How many more will it take to die?

Please, act.

Thank you again, for allowing me to testify