

# OPINION

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### The left is wrong on gun laws

To the Editor,  
The left uses clichés and half-truths to attack lawful gun owners. The term “common-sense gun safety laws” is a meaningless focus-group-tested phrase.  
The oft-repeated proposal to ban all assault rifles has already been tried; an assault weapons ban was in place from 1994 to 2004, with no decrease in the murder rate.  
They want to ban all semi-automatic weapons, which have been around since the early 1900’s. Semi-auto means one trigger pull, one shot, putting the law-abiding on par with crooks.  
Why were there no school shootings until Columbine? The left’s default position is to blame the gun, which misses the point. Why do we have more mass murderers in our society than we had in, say, 1920, when semi-autos were widely available?  
We need to explore that question. But the left always resorts to rules, regulations and punishment. They think we’ll become better people if they just regulate us a little more. Blaming the gun is a stealth assault on our freedom.  
They say that politicians who take money from the NRA are taking “blood money.” NRA money comes from millions of NRA members who obey the law, love our Constitution and want to protect ourselves and our families.  
Republicans take money from the NRA like Democrats take money from Planned Parenthood. In the left’s lexicon the NRA has blood on its hands, but Planned Parenthood is the body count champ. The tiny bodies at their door number in the millions.  
What about the leaky Federal Instacheck system? The Virginia Tech shooter passed the FBI background check even after a judge ruled him dangerous and mandated him to treatment. The Parkland school shooter’s dangerous behavior was ignored by the FBI and the Broward County Sheriff.  
The government the left loves is too incompetent or too indifferent to protect you but that same political left doesn’t want you to protect yourself. Michael A. Morrongiello, Ph. D. Corning

### Bampa's House will disrupt quiet neighborhood

To the Editor,  
As a resident of Brown Road in South Corning I am very upset about the fact that an organization, Corning Comfort Care, Inc., i.e. Bampa's House, is submitting an application for a conditional use permit to construct a hospice facility at the end of our "Dead End" street.  
Let me say at the outset that I and my neighbors are not in disagreement with the concept of the facility but the location currently being proposed.  
The resulting impact on our street would be a major one, however. There is only one access to our street to the proposed site and as a result the increase in auto traffic alone would be major.  
There are no sidewalks on our street so the children after exiting their school buses have to walk in the street. We are a popular street for exercise walkers and dog walkers alike, and an excess of automobile traffic would be dangerous for them.  
The facility would generate six (6) shift changes a day/night which in itself take away our peace and quiet in the evening and overnight hours. Most of us purchased our homes because of what a quiet neighborhood it is.  
There was an initial meeting regarding this proposal in October 2017 at which time we all were present and voiced our disapproval of the plan and the willingness to help them find another location more appropriate for the facility.  
This seems to have been disregarded out of hand. The owner of the property has offered the land to Corning Comfort Care free of charge and apparently the almighty dollar is struggling to win out over good common sense.  
Brown Road will not go away quietly and to whom ever is reading this do not think that you are untouchable in respect to where you live.  
Nancy A. Hamill Corning

**Please don't take quiet, safety away**

To the Editor,  
At 5:30 p.m., Tuesday 3/27, the Town of Corning Planning Board will hold a public hearing at the Town Hall (20 Maple St.) and decide whether to approve the construction by Corning Comfort Care Inc. of a business building,

“Bampa’s House,” at the end of a historically quiet 1950s residential cul-de-sac (zoned low-density residential) called Brown Road, Village of South Corning.  
Unlike government-certified, licensed, Medicare-approved hospices, comfort care homes fly under the regulatory radar by providing palliative hospice care to just one or two terminally ill residents at a time (fif 3-month life expectancy). Such “homes” have staff, but volunteers maintain them and provide palliative care. Bampa’s House would serve several counties.  
Last October, Brown Road residents were invited by flyer to attend a Bampa’s House informational meeting. The business’s representative, Ms. Joan Dugan Wilson, was surprised most voiced concerns.  
We were sympathetic to residential-hospice care, but locating a business at the very end of a narrow dead-end street without sidewalks and with low to non-existent traffic was unsafe for the 30 households on the street and the facility.  
People walk the street daily, with a dog, a stroller, a walker, a friend. Drivers wave and smile, drive slowly recognizing that dog, that car, that child.  
Many bought properties precisely because of the quiet, safety, and neighborliness that create the neighborhood’s magic and desirability. A business at the end of the street will break down and change that character forever.  
Unfamiliar drivers won’t know where those children live. They’ll drive faster, hurrying to or from work or to see a loved one who’s taken a turn. Residents will be subjected to an every-changing array of out-of-area vehicles, delivery trucks, ambulances.  
In short: the anonymous, harried traffic of a non-residential through-street, and it will increase astronomically. The street’s not designed for it.  
Why does Corning Comfort Care Inc. want Bampa’s House in a neighborhood that has already made clear the business isn’t welcome there because of safety issues?  
Planning Board, please, don’t lower the quality of life for 30 households to briefly help two people. Don’t take away the magic of Brown Road.  
Let’s find Bampa’s House an easily accessible, mixed-use location.

### Wanda Boeke Corning

### Mitrano can energize voters of the 23rd

To the editor:  
Six Democratic candidates for the 23rd Congressional District held a debate Wednesday, 3/4, in Elmira, which was covered by James Post in Dansville online and in the Hornell Evening News.  
The article rightly pointed out that on most issues, there are not huge policy differences among the candidates. All of them want an improved local economy, universal health care, real tax reform that doesn’t just benefit the top 1 percent, and rigorous defense of our environment, civil rights, and national security.  
However, that is where the similarities between candidates end. For the past three Congressional races in our district, the Democrats did not field a candidate who sufficiently galvanized voters to successfully replace our current do-nothing-unless-sanctioned-by-Trump Congressman.  
I believe this is the year to turn our district blue and Tracy Mitrano is the one candidate who can do it. Democratic election successes in the last year show voters will turn out for a candidate that energizes them.  
Never have I been moved to canvass door-to-door until I met Tracy and observed her thoughtful, realistic and energetic responses to our pressing concerns. Now I’m actually out in the cold, knocking on doors, gathering signatures, and talking with my friends and neighbors about why this election is so important and why Tracy is the one who can win it.  
While all the Democratic congressional candidates have strengths and various areas of expertise, Tracy has the firmest grasp of all the issues facing our district and our nation (including cybersecurity), and I think she is the only one with the charisma to get voters to the polls.  
I am hardly alone in this opinion. To date, Tracy has been endorsed by the mayors of Watkins Glen and Ithaca, a highly-regarded Jamestown City Councilwoman, the Working Families Party, and the Women’s Equality Party. I urge everyone to become an informed voter and to support Tracy!  
Kristin Chambers Hinsdale

## COMMENTARY | STATE SEN. TOM O'MARA, R-BIG FLATS

### Targeting those turning a profit on misery

Every single day comes a new headline or another startling statistic on the heroin and opioid epidemic that continues to devastate far too many communities and lives here at home, and across America.  
According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), “Every day, more than 115 Americans die after overdosing on opioids.”  
The federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) pegs the economic cost of prescription opioid abuse at nearly \$79 billion annually in the United States, “including the costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement.”  
Closer to home, the Albany-based Rockefeller Institute of Government, in a new report, makes this summary, “We found that drug deaths continue to surge in New York State. In one year, from 2015 to 2016, drug deaths increased 29 percent — from 3,009 total deaths to 3,894. In fact, it was the single largest annual increase in the number of deaths we examined going back to 2010. Overall...from 2010-16 there has been a 121 percent increase in the number of deaths in New York State.”  
That’s just a small snapshot of what we’re facing. It does not even begin to tell the personal, family stories of loss.  
In 2014, the New York State Senate created our Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, on which I serve as a member. Local police departments and addiction centers at that time, including many across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, were warning about the alarming rise in the availability and use of heroin and opioids.  
Over the past several years, while the task force’s work has helped enact and initiate important new state-level laws, programs, services and other responses, the crisis has grown increasingly urgent. The input we have received — and continue to receive — from the local front lines of this public health and safety crisis have targeted the necessary responses.  
Still, the overriding message has been this one: We cannot let up, not for one second. The threat of heroin, opioids, meth,

synthetic substances, bath salts and other illegal drugs continuing to spread like a wildfire throughout our communities is the number one public health crisis facing us today. It represents far too great a risk to spiral out of control, overwhelming and destroying individual lives along with local systems of health care, law enforcement, criminal justice and social services.  
My state Senate colleagues and I remain hopeful that the new state budget will include a record level of state funding to continue to establish state-operated addiction treatment centers, enhance community-based providers, and expand other programs and services to bolster New York’s education, prevention, treatment and recovery strategies.  
Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the law enforcement piece of the necessary response. I agree that we will not arrest our way out of this crisis. I also don’t believe we will treat our way out of it, especially not until we throw the book at the pushers and suppliers of these deadly drugs. Last week, that’s exactly what the Senate did. In particular, we once again targeted the traffickers and dealers of deadly drugs by approving legislation (S2761) I co-sponsor to allow law enforcement to charge drug dealers with homicide if the drugs they sell or supply results in an overdose death. The measure targets mid- to high-level drug suppliers who profit from these sales. The penalty would be a Class A-1 felony, carrying a penalty of 15 to 25 years in prison.  
Awareness and education, and prevention and treatment are fundamental responses.  
Tough laws and law enforcement are too.  
I recently read the following statement from a law enforcement agent in a state that allows homicide charges for drug dealers, “There are people who are out there to turn a profit on people’s misery. Those are the people we’re targeting. Our goal always is to move up the chain and to hold accountable the actual dealers.”  
Exactly.

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