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Sandy Hook families support California teachers' union

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NEWTOWN -- The families of seven victims of the Sandy Hook massacre have written a letter to the California Federation of Teachers supporting its effort to divest its pension fund of a company that makes guns.

"It makes sense for the parents of victims of that horrific tragedy would support our action to divest from a gun manufacturer," said [California Federation of Teachers Spokesman Fred Glass](#). "Teachers and parents are united in seeking a safe environment for their students."

"We are some of the parents who lost a beloved child on December 14, 2012 at [Sandy Hook Elementary School](#). We write to thank you and your fellow teachers for your efforts in pressuring the California State Teachers' [Retirement System](#) to divest from [Freedom Group](#) -- a company that distinguishes itself as the largest supplier of "civilian" combat rifles, including the weapon that made the historically fatal and tragic shooting at Sandy Hook possible," states the letter signed by 11 parents.

"We are sick of being told that guns don't kill people, people kill people. There is no question that it takes a deeply disturbed individual to open fire in an elementary school. But there is also no question that it takes a monstrosity of a weapon to murder 20 children and 6 educators in 264 seconds. Above all, we are sickened that Freedom Group -- and its owner, [Cerberus Capital Management](#) -- profited from the deaths of our children."

Those who signed the letter are: David and [Francine Wheeler](#), parents of 6-year-old [Benjamin Wheeler](#); Ian and [Nicole Hockley](#), parents of 6-year-old [Dylan Hockley](#); Mark and [Jacqueline Barden](#), parents of 7-year-old [Daniel Barden](#); Veronique and [Leonard Pozner](#), parents of 6-year-old [Noah Pozner](#); [Neil Heslin](#), father of 6-year-old [Jesse Lewis](#); [Gilles Rousseau](#), father of teacher [Lauren Rousseau](#) and [Donna Soto](#), mother of teacher [Victoria Soto](#).

[Michael Koskoff](#), whose Bridgeport law firm represents the families, said the owner of the Freedom Group is Connecticut hedge fund owner [Stephen Feinberg](#). Koskoff said the families are hoping to convince Feinberg to get out of the gun business.

"The California Federation of Teachers is taking a very important stand because it puts pressure on a company that is making money off a product that has killed children and teachers," he continued.

Last December the families of 10 victims, many of whom signed Wednesday's letter, filed a lawsuit against [Remington Outdoor Co.](#), the owner of [Bushmaster Firearms International](#), [Camfour](#) Inc., a firearm distributor, and Riverview Gun Sales, the store where the Bushmaster rifle used in the massacre was purchased in 2010.

The lawsuit claims that the Bushmaster AR-15 rifle, which can expel 30 bullets in a matter of seconds, each capable of piercing body armor and causing catastrophic injury, should not have been entrusted to the general public because it is a military assault weapon that is unsuited for civilian use.

Some of the same families are also suing the Lanza estate seeking to collect from the mother's homeowner insurance.