



## Contradictions

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Her parents are police officers; she grew up with guns in her house. Tatiana understands her rights under the second amendment to the Constitution. But, she walked 50 miles from Madison to Janesville to protest gun violence, organizing dozens of other students to join her in this 4-day march.

Tatiana Washington, a keynote speaker at the Wisconsin Council of Churches annual meeting, is, in some ways, a contradiction. Her life experiences have taught her to respect guns and to understand their value in maintaining order. As a young woman, she also has witnessed police brutality, practices active-shooter lockdown drills in her school, and grieved when her aunt was shot to death. She sees both sides of the issue.

Through 50 Miles More, Tatiana has chosen to speak out for freedoms that are hard to refute: "We believe that young people in every neighborhood and community should enjoy some very basic freedoms:

- Freedom to go to school without being shot.
- Freedom to walk our neighborhood streets without being shot.
- Freedom to go to the movies without being shot.
- Freedom to go to parks or playgrounds without being shot.
- Freedom to go shopping without being shot.
- Freedom from living in fear of being killed. Period."

For Tatiana and thousands of students across the country, their safety is both a public health issue and a moral issue. Though demanding real and visible change, the 50 Miles More group is committed to honoring the diversity of the students' experiences and perspectives. They open lines of communication, rather than shut them down. They believe sensible, practical gun reform can be crafted that crosses political lines.

Living in the contradictions is hard work. It requires respectful conversation and compromise. It insists on commonsense over affiliations. We've balanced constitutional dilemmas before:

*I have a right to worship as I see fit.*

You have a right of free speech and to publish words in the press.

*The government has the right to take private property for public use.*

*You have a right to be free from my worship.*

I have a right to only have truth published about me.

*The owners are entitled to just compensation.*

...and so forth. Now, we add Tatiana's voice – and the voices of generations of young people who are tired of being afraid --

You have a right to own a gun.

We have a right not to be shot.

For their lives, can we again make balanced decisions?