

Three Democrat Senators Introduce Assault Weapons Ban

The following is a press release from U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein office on Jan 09, 2019:

Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) led a group of senators in introducing the Assault Weapons Ban of 2019, an updated bill to ban the sale, transfer, manufacture and importation of military-style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines.

In addition to Feinstein, Murphy and Blumenthal, cosponsors of the bill include Senators Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Tom Carper (D-Del.), Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.), Kamala Harris (D-Calif.), Bob Casey (D-Pa.), Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Tina Smith (D-Minn.), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.), Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and Mark Warner (D-Va.).

“Last year we saw tens of thousands of students nationwide take to the streets to demand action to stop mass shootings and stem the epidemic of gun violence that plagues our communities. Our youngest generation has grown up with active-shooter drills, hiding under their desks—and now they’re saying enough is enough,” said Senator Dianne Feinstein. “Americans across the nation are asking Congress to reinstate the federal ban on military-style assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. If we’re going to put a stop to mass shootings and protect our children, we need to get these

weapons of war off our streets.”

“Military-style assault rifles are the weapons of choice for mass murderers. There’s just no reason why these guns, which were designed to kill as many people as quickly as possible, are sold to the public,” said Senator Chris Murphy. “This past year, we’ve seen Americans rise up and demand Congress change our gun laws. Banning assault weapons would save lives, and I’m proud to join Senator Feinstein in introducing this bill.”

“Assault weapons and high-capacity magazines are deadly and dangerous weapons of war that belong on battlefields—not our streets. They have no purpose for self-defense or hunting, and no business being in our schools, churches, and malls,” said Senator Richard Blumenthal. “By passing this legislation, Congress can honor the memory of the beautiful lives cut short by military-style assault weapons in Newtown, Parkland, Las Vegas, San Bernardino, and far too many other American cities. This is the year for my colleagues to turn our rhetoric into reality and finally end America’s gun violence epidemic.”

Key provisions:

- Bans the sale, manufacture, transfer, and importation of 205 military-style assault weapons by name. Owners may keep existing weapons.
- Bans any assault weapon that accepts a detachable ammunition magazine and has one or more military characteristics including a pistol grip, a forward grip, a barrel shroud, a threaded barrel or a folding or telescoping stock. Owners may keep existing weapons.
- Bans magazines and other ammunition feeding devices that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition, which allow shooters to quickly fire many rounds without needing to reload. Owners may keep existing magazines.

Exemptions to the bill:

- The bill exempts by name more than 2,200 guns for hunting,

household defense or recreational purposes.

- The bill includes a grandfather clause that exempts all weapons lawfully possessed at the date of enactment.

Other provisions:

- Requires a background check on any future sale, trade or gifting of an assault weapon covered by the bill.

- Requires that grandfathered assault weapons are stored using a secure gun storage or safety device like a trigger lock.

- Prohibits the transfer of high-capacity ammunition magazines.

- Bans bump-fire stocks and other devices that allow semi-automatic weapons to fire at fully automatic rates.

Updates to Assault Weapons Ban of 2017:

- Bans stocks that are "otherwise foldable or adjustable in a manner that operates to reduce the length, size, or any other dimension, or otherwise enhances the concealability of a firearm."

- Bans assault pistols that weigh 50 or more ounces when unloaded, a policy included in the original 1994 ban.

- Bans assault pistol stabilizing braces that transform assault pistols into assault rifles by allowing the shooter to shoulder the weapon and fire more accurately.

- Bans Thordsen-type grips and stocks that are designed to evade a ban on assault weapons.

Mass shootings that took place last year using military-style assault rifles:

- Las Vegas, Nev. (October 2018): In the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history, a gunman opened fire on concertgoers in Las Vegas, killing 58 people and injuring 422 others. The gunman used multiple AR-15 style assault rifles fitted with bump-fire stocks.

- Sutherland Springs, Texas (October 2018): A gunman entered a church killing 26 parishioners and injuring 20 others. His

weapon was an AR-15 style assault rifle.

– Parkland, Fla. (February 2018): A student at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School opened fire on his classmates and teachers, killing 17 and injuring 17 more.