



## Senators Feinstein, Warner, Schumer, DeWine Introduce Legislation to Reestablish Assault Weapons Ban

*-- Six Month Anniversary of the Expiration of the Ban--*  
March 14, 2005

**Washington, DC** – Six months following the expiration of the federal assault weapons ban, U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), John W. Warner (R-VA), Charles Schumer (D-NY), and Mike DeWine (R-OH) today introduced legislation that would reestablish the ban in federal law.

**“Since the assault weapons ban was allowed to expire, it has been open season for criminals who want the most dangerous types of military-style assault weapons,”** Senator Feinstein said. **“Let there be no doubt, these weapons are the weapons of choice for those seeking to do the most harm in the least amount of time – terrorists, gang members, and grievance killers. We know the ban worked. We voted for its renewal in the Senate last year. Yet, it was allowed to expire. This failure will have deadly consequences on the streets of America. It is time to reestablish the ban and help make our communities safer.”**

Senator Warner said, **“I am proud to stand with law enforcement professionals from Virginia and all across the country in supporting this common-sense ban, which protects the public, while preserving the important and constitutional rights of law-abiding gun owners.”**

**“We reduced crime substantially in the 1990's in part because of the assault weapon ban, which is why Democrats and Republicans are backing its renewal,”** Senator Schumer said. **“There is no legitimate use for these weapons, period. They are designed to kill people in great numbers, and have been used to target our police officers around the country. The Second Amendment can thrive while we take limited and reasonable measures to protect American families from gun violence.”**

**“Reestablishing the assault weapons ban is simply good public policy. The law modestly prohibits a select few military-style weapons, all the while protecting the rights of legitimate gun owners nationwide,”** Senator DeWine said. **“As a former prosecutor, I understand the challenges Ohio’s mayors and law enforcement officials face, and we owe it to them to reestablish this law.”**

On March 2, 2004, the Senate approved the reauthorization of the assault weapons ban as an amendment to legislation pushed by the National Rifle Association giving gun manufacturers and dealers unprecedented protection from civil lawsuits. But the gun immunity bill did not pass the Senate and on September 14, 2004, the Assault Weapons ban expired. For 10 years, it was a

proven and effective law that reduced the proportion of banned assault weapons traced to crime by two-thirds.

**“Not having a ban on assault weapons is insanity,”** Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton said. **“It is mind boggling to me that we would allow people to legally own guns that have the killing power that assault weapons have. If cops are outgunned, how can they be expected to keep themselves and their communities safe? Congress must re-establish the assault weapon ban.”**

The ban had widespread support and proved to be effective:

- More than three-quarters of Americans – including two-thirds of gun owners -- supported the extension of the ban;
- The men and women of law enforcement across the nation supported the ban because, being on the front lines, they know it makes communities safer. The Fraternal Order of Police endorsed another ten years, as did almost every other major law enforcement organization, including chiefs of police all across Ohio, Virginia and California.
- No weapons were ever confiscated from legitimate gun-owners.
- Department of Justice records indicated that the use of banned assault weapons in crimes had declined measurably -- by 65% in one analysis – since the measure took effect.

The new legislation would renew the ban on the manufacture and importation of 19 types of assault weapons (and many others by characteristic) for 10 years. Following is a summary of the bill:

### ***Key Components of the Assault Weapons Ban***

- **Bans** 19 specifically named weapons, like the TEC-9, AK-47, and others.
- **Bans** all **semi-automatic rifles** that can accept a detachable magazine and **have at least two listed features**, including a pistol grip or thumbhole stock; folding stock or telescopic stock; flash suppressor or a threaded barrel capable of accepting a flash suppressor; bayonet mount; or grenade launcher.
- **Bans** all **semiautomatic pistols** that can accept a detachable magazine and have at least **two listed features**, including an ammunition magazine that attaches outside of the pistol grip; a threaded barrel; a shroud that permits the shooter to hold the firearm with the nontrigger hand without being burned; or a manufactured weight of at least 50 ounces (unloaded); and
- **Bans** the **importation of large capacity ammunition feeding devices**.

- Exempts 670 hunting and recreational rifles from the law by name, as well as a set of specifically-described weapons, such as antique or bolt action weapons.

The bill is also cosponsored by Senators Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Hillary Clinton (D-NY), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Carl Levin (D-MI), and Christopher Dodd (D-CT).

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