



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 810

Resolution urging the United States Congress to reauthorize the Assault Weapons Ban with strengthening amendments.

By Council Members Yassky, Brewer, Comrie, Fidler, Gerson, Jackson, Koppell, Liu, Monserrate, Nelson, Quinn, Recchia, Seabrook, Serrano, Weprin, Gennaro, Gioia, Sanders and James

Whereas, The Assault Weapons Ban, which bans the sale of semiautomatic weapons, was passed as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 and will expire in September, 2004 unless Congress reauthorizes the law; and
Whereas, The Assault Weapons Ban, which does not restrict the use of traditional guns designed for hunting and recreational activities, recognizes the difference between semiautomatic assault weapons and sporting guns, as semiautomatic assault weapons are designed to maximize lethal effects through an extremely rapid rate of fire, firing many rounds in rapid succession; and
Whereas, Law enforcement officers are at particular risk from assault weapons-which are the "weapon of choice" of drug traffickers, gangs, and paramilitary extremist groups-because of their ability to penetrate body armor and their high firepower; and
Whereas, Prior to the Ban's Passage, assault rifles were used to: kill 5 children and injure 29 others in the Stockton schoolyard massacre in 1989; kill 8 people and injure 6 others in the San Francisco Pettit and Martin shootings in 1993; kill 2 CIA employees and wound 3 others at the CIA Headquarters shootings in 1993; and kill 4 ATF special agents and injure 16 others in the Branch-Davidian standoff, also in 1993; and
Whereas, According to a 1999 study by the National Institute of Justice, in the first year after the passage of the Ban, national assault weapons traces declined by 20 percent and gun murders declined by 10% whereas in the seven states with their own assault weapons bans already in place assault weapons traces only declined by 8-10%, supporting the evidence that the national trends reflected the effects of the Assault Weapons Ban; and
Whereas, Tens of thousands of "grandfathered" assault weapons are still in circulation and thousands more will go into circulation if the Assault Weapons Ban is not reauthorized; and
Whereas, Congress should ensure that the following amendments are included when the Ban is reauthorized: the definition of assault weapon should include all firearms that accept detachable ammunition magazines; the list of assault weapons should be revised to delete extraneous characteristics and better define others; the term "firearm" should be clarified to include the frame of a prohibited gun; manufacturers should be prohibited from using pre-Ban, high-capacity ammunition magazines in post-Ban assault weapons; and importation of high-capacity ammunition magazines should be prohibited; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the United States Congress to reauthorize the Assault Weapons Ban with strengthening amendments.

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