

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 51

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 24, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator VIN GOPAL
District 11 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Urges President and Congress to reauthorize assault weapons ban.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



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1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** urging the President and the Congress of
2 the United States to reauthorize the assault weapons ban.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Americans own more firearms per capita than residents of
5 any other country, and while the United States makes up less than
6 five percent of the world's population more than 31 percent of the
7 world's mass shootings occur here, and firearm homicide rates are
8 25.2 percent higher in the United States as compared to other
9 wealthy nations; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Recognizing that assault weapons pose a serious threat to
11 law enforcement and to the safety of the citizens in New Jersey, in
12 1990 New Jersey enacted legislation banning assault weapons and
13 certain large capacity ammunition feeding devices; and
14 **WHEREAS**, In an effort to curb firearm-related violence, Congress
15 enacted the "Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of
16 1994," which contained a provision to ban the sale of semi-
17 automatic assault weapons; and
18 **WHEREAS**, This law halted the importation of assault weapons that
19 were not already banned and required domestic firearm
20 manufacturers to stop producing semi-automatic assault weapons
21 that incorporated military features intended for combat, not
22 designed for sport use, and ammunition clips that held more than 10
23 rounds, except for military or police use; and
24 **WHEREAS**, Semi-automatic assault weapons have become the
25 "weapon of choice" for mass shooters, drug traffickers, weapons
26 traffickers, gangs, and paramilitary extremist groups; and
27 **WHEREAS**, Despite the fact that assault weapons can cause devastating
28 wounds, release more shots per second, and penetrate body armor,
29 Congress allowed the ban to expire on September 13, 2004; and
30 **WHEREAS**, The legal market for semi-automatic weapons increased by
31 27 percent between 2007 and 2011, with an increasing number of
32 citizens owning with these military-style weapons; and
33 **WHEREAS**, Assault weapons have been used in some of the nation's
34 most shocking crimes, including the 1984 Cleveland Elementary
35 School shooting in Stockton, California; the 1999 Columbine High
36 School shooting; the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting; the 2009 Fort
37 Hood shooting; the 2011 Safeway Market shooting in Tucson,
38 Arizona, in which Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was injured;
39 the July 2012 movie theater shooting in Aurora, Colorado; the
40 December 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in
41 Newtown, Connecticut; the 2015 shooting at Inland Regional
42 Center in San Bernardino, California; the 2016 shooting at the
43 Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida; the October 2017 Route 91
44 Harvest Festival shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada, the deadliest mass
45 shooting in modern United States history; the November 2017 First
46 Baptist Church shooting in Sutherland Springs, Texas; and the 2018
47 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland,
48 Florida; and

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1 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper and in the public interest
2 for this Legislature to respectfully urge the President and the
3 Congress of the United States to enact an assault weapons ban
4 including a prohibition against large capacity ammunition feeding
5 devices; now, therefore,

7 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

9 1. The Senate of the State of New Jersey respectfully urges the
10 President and the Congress of the United States to reauthorize the
11 assault weapons ban.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President and the Vice President of the United States, the Majority and Minority Leader of the United States Senate, the Majority and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of the United States Congress elected from New Jersey.

22 STATEMENT

24 This resolution urges the President and the Congress of the
25 United States to reauthorize the assault weapons ban.

26 In 1990 New Jersey recognized that assault weapons posed a
27 serious threat to law enforcement and to the safety of the citizens
28 and enacted legislation banning assault weapons and certain large
29 capacity ammunition feeding devices.

30 In an effort to curb firearm related violence, Congress enacted
31 the “Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994.”
32 The law banned the sale of semi-automatic assault weapons. The
33 assault weapons covered under the ban are designed with military
34 features intended for combat, and had become the "weapon of
35 choice" for mass shooters, drug traffickers, weapons traffickers,
36 gangs, and paramilitary extremist groups prior to the ban.

37 In spite of the carnage unleashed by individuals with these
38 weapons, Congress allowed the nationwide assault weapons ban to
39 expire on September 13, 2004.

40 With the market for assault weapons increasing and with these
41 weapons being used in some of the nation's most shocking crimes,
42 including mass shootings at elementary schools, high schools,
43 colleges, work places, movie theaters, grocery stores, shopping
44 malls, and places of worship, the President and Congress of the
45 United States are urged to reauthorize the ban on assault weapons.