



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 25, 2013

Senator Dianne Feinstein's Gun Bill: Disingenuous Overreaction

The reaction to California Democrat Senator Dianne Feinstein's [introduction](#) of her bill "The Assault Weapons Ban of 2013" on Thursday [was almost immediate](#). The director of public relations for the National Rifle Association (NRA), Andrew Arulanandam, stated:



Senator Feinstein has been trying to ban guns from law-abiding citizens for decades. It's disappointing but not surprising that she is once again focused on curtailing the Constitution instead of prosecuting criminals....

The American people know gun bans do not work and we are confident Congress will reject Senator Feinstein's wrong-headed approach.

In her introduction of the bill on Thursday, Feinstein noted that she and her staff had been working on it for more than a year, waiting for the best time to offer it. The Sandy Hook shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, gave her that opportunity:

The bill introduced today is the product of more than a year of work, with input from across the country. Getting this bill signed into law will be an uphill battle, and I recognize that — but it's a battle worth waging.

We must balance the desire of a few to own military-style assault weapons with the growing threat to lives across America. If 20 dead children in Newtown wasn't a wake-up call that these weapons of war don't belong on our streets, I don't know what is.

She outlined the principal goals for her bill: It would prohibit "the sale, manufacture, transfer and importation of 157 of the most commonly-owned military-style assault weapons." In addition, her bill would ban "large-capacity magazines ... that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition."

In addition, any transfer such assault weapons would require a background check first, even for private face-to-face sales, and such weapons would be required to be "stored safely using a secure gun storage or safety device in order to keep them away from 'prohibited' persons."

Finally, anyone owning a now-banned high capacity magazine would be prohibited, under federal law, from selling it or giving it away to anyone else.

She said that her bill would reduce greatly the mass shootings that occurred in Newtown, Connecticut, Aurora, Colorado and elsewhere:

I believe this bill is a big step toward ending the mass shootings that have devastated families across the country — from Newtown to Aurora, from Tucson to Virginia Tech, from Columbine to Oak Creek.



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And then she took a swing at the makers of such weapons:

It's time for Americans to stand up and tell the gun manufacturers that the lives of our children are more important than their profits and get these dangerous weapons out of our schools, our workplaces, our malls and our theaters. It's time to take action, and we'll get it done, no matter how long it takes.

Cosponsors of her bill predictably included anti-gunners such as Senators Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Carl Levin (D-Mich.), John Rockefeller (D-W.Va.), Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), and Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.).

Once enacted, her bill would be just a first step [toward total confiscation of guns](#) from the American people. She admitted: "The purpose [of my bill] is to dry up the supply of these weapons over time ... [and would be] a significant first step as part of a comprehensive program [of gun confiscation]."

A close look at her bill shows that Feinstein [means exactly what she says](#). Banned would be

All semiautomatic rifles that can accept a detachable magazine and have at least one military feature: pistol grip; forward grip; folding, telescoping, or detachable stock; grenade launcher or rocket launcher; barrel shroud; or threaded barrel.

All semiautomatic pistols that can accept a detachable magazine and have at least one military feature: threaded barrel; second pistol grip; barrel shroud; capacity to accept a detachable magazine at some location outside of the pistol grip; or semiautomatic version of an automatic firearm.

All semiautomatic rifles and handguns that have a fixed magazine with the capacity to accept more than 10 rounds.

All semiautomatic shotguns that have a folding, telescoping, or detachable stock; pistol grip; fixed magazine with the capacity to accept more than 5 rounds; ability to accept a detachable magazine; forward grip; grenade launcher or rocket launcher; or shotgun with a revolving cylinder.

All ammunition feeding devices (magazines, strips, and drums) capable of accepting more than 10 rounds.

Her bill would also require a

background check on all sales or transfers of a grandfathered assault weapon.

This background check can be run through the FBI or, if a state chooses, initiated with a state agency, as with the existing background check system.

It would prohibit

the sale or transfer of large-capacity ammunition feeding devices lawfully possessed on the date of enactment of the bill.

It would impose

a safe storage requirement for grandfathered firearms, to keep them away from prohibited persons.

And it would require that

assault weapons and large-capacity ammunition feeding devices manufactured after the date of the bill's enactment be engraved with the serial number and date of manufacture of the weapon.



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The list of the more than 150 firearms prohibited in her bill includes well-known names such as Rock River Arms, Norinco, Armalite, Beretta, Bushmaster, Remington, Sig-Sauer, Smith & Wesson, and Thompson.

In reviewing this list with Bob Joly, a certified NRA instructor in Peyton, Colorado, Joly said, “She’s banning everything. These are just military ‘lookalikes’ but she doesn’t like the way they look and so she wants to get rid of them. We’ll all be automatic lawbreakers if this thing passes.”

The chances of Feinstein’s bill becoming law [are between slim and none](#). House leaders won’t even consider the bill until it, or something like it, passes the Senate. And Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has acknowledged that Feinstein’s bill “could not pass the Senate,” although he has agreed to bring some milder legislation to the floor.

Photo of Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) speaking at a news conference about her gun control legislation Jan. 24: AP Images

A graduate of Cornell University and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelmann@thenewamerican.com.



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