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### After-Action Report Regarding the Activities of the Veterans For Peace Sane Gun Laws Group, 2025

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**Time to read** (excluding summary, footnotes, tables, and exhibits): 16 minutes

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## **Summary**

**Discussion:** This report describes the following:

- **The group’s purpose:** To advocate at the Legislature for a state ban on sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

- **Brief history prior to 2025:**
  - Since 2018, we have obtained commitments of support for the ban from 41 of the 46 legislators we met with including the chairs of the key committees in both branches of the Legislature, the five main authors of assault weapon ban bills, and the leaders in the House and Senate (with the exception of then-Speaker, the late Melissa Hortman).
  - We delivered our two-page Position Paper to a total of 117 legislators from both parties.
  - We have joined the other common-sense gun control groups for 17 rallies, hearings, and press conferences at the Capitol (Exhibit A).

**2025 activities:**

1. **Rallies at the Capitol:** Participated in two additional allies (Exhibits A and B).
2. **Compiling information to support the state ban:** Prepared “A Guide for Supporting a State Ban on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines,” which contains the most relevant information regarding both sides of the issue. The group’s 5 major reports include 42 pages of text in their bodies, 15 exhibits, 90 footnotes, and a total of 93 pages.
3. **Efforts to get cities involved, and collaboration with other groups:** Collaborated with other common-sense gun law groups to help 4 cities adopt resolutions and ordinances in support of weapons bans (Exhibit D, E, & F).
4. **Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group:** We filed submissions with the Group.
5. **Winning over open-minded legislators:** We identified 22 “target” legislators who were moderate, represent swing districts, or had announced they were not seeking reelection. Of the 6 legislators we met with this Fall, one committed to supporting an assault weapon ban, 2 stated they may support such a ban if the bill included other measures intended to reduce gun violence, and 1 stated he supports a stand-alone ban on high-capacity magazines. We will continue to seek meetings with the others.
6. **Analysis of the proposed bill by Minnesota Senator Zaynab Mohamed:** We shared the analysis of the bill with 22 “target” legislators.
7. **Other actions:** Members attended the Statewide Gun Violence Prevention Coalition meeting, submitted a letter to the local Fox News TV station, gave an interview to an editor of the U of M’s *The Minnesota Daily*, and signed up three additional veteran members.

## Introduction, Purpose, and History

Since 2018, I have coordinated the efforts of our now, 31-member, Sane Gun Laws subgroup of Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace. We have been advocating at the Legislature for a state ban on sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. However, the several bills that have been proposed every legislative session have never even made it close to a floor vote. Meanwhile, the other common-sense gun control groups focused on laws with a greater chance of adoption, and they were successful for a slew of laws during the DFL “trifecta” of the 2023 and 2024 sessions. We had no activities during the 2025 legislative session since, without the trifecta, there was no chance for any progress given the absolute Republican opposition to any common-sense gun regulations (refer to Strategy 6 below).

Then things changed. On 8/27/2025, a 23-year-old assailant, using his legally acquired assault rifle, fired 116 high-powered, military rounds in just a few minutes into the Annunciation Church killing 2 children and wounding 23 people, including 20 children. In response, the mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul and seven other cities stated their support on 9/2/2025 for a ban on assault weapons,<sup>1</sup> and the Minneapolis City Council later approved a resolution in support of a state ban. Gov. Walz promised to call a special session of the Legislature to address gun violence (which never happened), and a state ban on assault weapons rose to the top of the list of priorities.

This report describes the strategies and activities of our Sane Gun Laws Group from 9/1/25 to date. It's important to note that many people were involved in these activities. Hopefully I've captured their contributions. If not, please let me know and I will revise this report accordingly. When I use the word "I," the reader should assume that my wife, Cynthia, has her "fingerprints" on everything I do including editing every publication and advising my every move. Thank you, everyone, for the help. (Exhibit A includes additional photos.)

**History:** From the beginning, our main strategy was to make personal contacts with our legislators, and advocate for our position. We began on 3/12/2018 when members of our group<sup>2</sup> met over an eight-hour period with four Senators and four Representatives (top photo shows us with Sen. Matt Klein). To date, we got that commitment from 41 of the 46 legislators we met with (refer to the table in Strategy 6) including the chairs of the key committees in both branches of the Legislature, the five main authors of assault weapon ban bills, and the leaders in the House and Senate (with the exception of then-Speaker, the late Melissa Hortman).

For me, our personal meetings with our legislators were fascinating. We carried with us the "veteran mystique" (as Common Defense calls it) that garnered respect from all we met. We told our personal stories about our experiences with these weapons of war and they listened. We followed up with each legislator by presenting a thank you certificate that Bruce



<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/twin-cities-mayors-changes-to-gun-laws/>

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Berry, Robert Hale, Michael Madden, Michael McDonald, Michael Orange, and Barry Riesch.



Berry designed (above photo), and sending a thank you letter. The certificates were a very effective way to say thank you, cement our relationships with our supporters, and serve as a visual reminder of their commitment to get a bill passed (the sample photo at right is with Rep. Mary Francis Clardy). Rep. Finke was so proud of hers that she has it prominently displayed on a separate pedestal in her office.

We also delivered our two-page Position Paper to every DFL legislator (69 representatives and 34 senators), plus to 9 Republican representatives. A total of 117 legislators.

Over the years, we have joined the other common-sense gun control groups for 19 rallies, hearings, and press conferences at the Capitol<sup>3</sup> (e.g., Moms Demand Action, Protect Minnesota, Every Town for Gun Safety, Giffords, etc.). We have proudly displayed our two banners (the photos at right and below show Gov. Walz addressing the gathering on 1/8/2019 and a hearing of the Senate on 2/29/2020). Our fellow member, Bob Mokos, who is a nationally known advocate for sane gun laws, was a keynote speaker for the rally at the Capitol on 2/16/23.

On 4/12/2023, member Jacob Thomas, who is the Communications Director for Common Defense (CD), sent out a form to 1,344 Minnesota members of CD. The form included a link to a CD website that enabled a person to automatically send an amendable letter in support of the ban to their legislators. A total of 49 veterans sent letters to 98 legislators.

We prepared a letter to the editor and obtained 27 veteran co-signers that we submitted it to 7 publications in 2024 (*Minnesota Star Tribune*, *Pioneer Press*, *MinnPost*, *The Minnesota Reformer*, *St. Paul Voice*, *Northeastern*, and *Lake County Press*), and Dave Borton sent it to the editor of the AFL-CIO labor review in Minnesota and a letter to the Exec VP of the state teachers union for consideration on their advocacy page). It was published in the *Lake County Press* on 3/22/24.



## 2025 Strategies and Activities

Our members were involved in the following *Strategies* between September 2025 and the start of the 2026 legislative session in February:

**1. Rallies at the Capitol:** We held our banners for the two, 1 ½-hour-long rallies at the Capitol:

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<sup>3</sup> Rallies and hearings at the Capitol (18 plus a press conference): 2018 (3/1, 3/12, 3/14, 4/7, 5/19); 2019 (1/8, 2/14 press conference, 3/3, 3/19, 4/29, 5/24, 8/7, 12/19); 2020 (2/19, 12/20; 2023 (2/16, 4/25); 2025 (9/1, 9/16, 9/27)

- **Youth United for Gun Violence Prevention Rally 9/1/25:** Attended by Mike McDonald, Arlys Herem, Kelly Bankole, Dave Borton and his grandson, Connor, and my wife, Cynthia, and me.
- **Don't Look Away Rally sponsored by Moms Demand Action and others on 9/27/25:** Attended by Jim McKenzie and his wife, Patty, and Cynthia and me. I was one of the speakers (Exhibit A includes photos, and Exhibit B includes the speech).

Several people came up to thank us for our service in this cause. Cynthia and I also connected with a Native American combat vet from the Iraq-Afghanistan War for whom the rally evoked very troubling emotions.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Compiling information to support the state ban: Exhibit C

includes the report I prepared, "A Guide for Supporting for a State Ban on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines." It includes all of the most relevant information regarding both sides of the issue. The image at right shows the table of contents for the 17-page report. I have been sharing it with anyone who is a part of this effort.

The table at right summarizes the group's 5 major reports "by the numbers." They include 42 pages of text in their bodies, 15 exhibits, 90 footnotes, and a total of 93 pages.

Contents ( <u>underlined</u> text is hyperlinked to that section)		Page
Purpose, Basic Assumptions, and Definitions .....		1
Ban Opponents' Belief: Bans <u>Demonize</u> AR-15-Style Rifles and Penalize Their Owners .....		3
Ban Opponents' Belief: AR-15-Style Rifles Are Not " <u>Weapons of War</u> " .....		4
Ban Opponents' Belief: Bans Are <u>Not Effective</u> .....		7
<u>Bans are Legal</u> and Minnesotans Want Them .....		8
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Ban Opponents' Belief: We Should <u>Harden Schools</u> and Have Armed School Resource Officers or Teachers .....		13
Current <u>Restrictions</u> on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines .....		14
<u>Other</u> .....		15
<u>Resources</u> .....		16

Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws Group, 2025 Documents: By the Numbers				
Report Title	Pages in Body	Unique Exhibits*	# of Footnotes	Total Unique Pages*
Support of a Minnesota Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines (11/21/2025)	1.5		14	2
A Guide for Supporting a State Ban on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines (1/31/2026)	16		48	16
Analysis of the Proposed Bill by Minnesota Senator Zaynab Mohamed for a State Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines (1/21/2026)	9	2	19	31
West St. Paul City Council Resolution in Support of a State Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines: A Description of the Approval Process (9/25/2025)	5	6		25
After-Action Report Regarding the Activities of the Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws Group, 2025 (2/1/2026)	10.5	7	9	19
<b>Totals</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>93</b>

\* "Unique" means the material is not included in one of the other reports.

## 3. Efforts to get cities involved, and collaboration with other groups:

- **West St. Paul resolution:** On 9/2/2025, the mayors of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and seven other cities<sup>5</sup> held a press conference to call for a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons. In

<sup>4</sup> I gave him a copy of my book, *Embracing the Ghosts: PTSD and the Vietnam Quagmire*, and my email but have yet to hear from him again.

<sup>5</sup> Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter were joined by the mayors of Bloomington, Stillwater, Vadnais Heights, Minnetonka, Hopkins, Richfield and Columbia Heights.

response, I asked the Mayor of West St. Paul, my city, the next day to join the mayors calling for a ban. With the help of the six members of the West St. Paul City Council, we were able to get the Council to unanimously pass a resolution calling for the state ban (covered in a separate after-action report in [Exhibit D](#)).

**Leaders for Common Sense Gun Laws**  
(Photos clockwise from upper-left)

Patty Matthews, Moms Demand Action
Jessica DeWeerth, Protect MN
Erin Zamoff, Moms Demand Action
Gretchen Damon, Moms Demand Action
Brie Ehrmann, Moms Demand Action
Kathleen Erin Doyle Anderson, Moms Demand Action
Jayne Tiedmann, Moms Demand Action
(no photo)



I prepared and presented VFP thank you certificates to the 5 West St. Paul council members that wanted them, and I presented one for Patty Matthews, the South Metro team leader for Moms Demand Action who got numerous members out for the WSP City Council meeting when the resolution was adopted ([Exhibit D](#) includes photos). I also sent the West St. Paul ban resolution to the following: Governor Walz, the 12 members of the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group, the Executive Director of the Regional Council of Mayors, and the editor of the *Minnesota Reformer*.

- Collaborating with Moms Demand Action:** We collaborated with many key leaders of gun control groups to seek resolutions calling for a ban in their cities, and I shared my after-action report about the West St. Paul resolution with them. The leader for the South Metro Moms Demand Action, Brie Ehrmann, had 120 copies of it printed for the group's members. They reported progress in four cities: Eagan, Roseville, Apple Valley, and Burnsville. However, Brie later stated that they weren't able to make any headway with the city councils passing the ban, but they came up with a workaround. Using the Google Form at right,<sup>6</sup> scores of Moms members asked their local, elected officials to sign on as individuals to a letter of support to the Governor. Since Gov. Walz has already stated his strong support, he can use these signatures as further evidence of statewide support for a ban.

### A Call for a Statewide Ban on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

Dear Governor Walz,

As local elected officials from communities across the State of Minnesota, we write to you with a shared and urgent concern: the growing threat of gun violence in our cities and towns. We see firsthand the toll it takes on our residents, families, and neighborhoods — from daily incidents of gunfire to the fear that ripples through schools, places of worship, and public gatherings.

We believe it is time for Minnesota to take decisive action to protect our communities by enacting a statewide ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. These weapons of war have no place in civilian life. They are designed for maximum destruction and have been used repeatedly in mass shootings across the nation, inflicting devastating loss of life in mere moments.

While many responsible Minnesotans own firearms for hunting, sport, and self-defense, assault weapons and high-capacity magazines go far beyond those purposes. Common-sense measures to limit their sale, possession, and manufacture would help keep our communities safer — without infringing upon lawful gun ownership.

We commend your leadership on public safety and recognize that meaningful progress requires courage and collaboration. Local governments cannot solve this crisis alone; it demands statewide attention and the strength of unified action. We urge you to work with the Minnesota Legislature to enact a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Our communities deserve to send their children to school, gather in public spaces, and live their daily lives without fear of such senseless violence.

We stand ready to support you in advancing this critical step toward a safer Minnesota.

<sup>6</sup> The form had a section not shown for the officials to provide their name, city, email, and attest to being an elected official.



I developed a transmittal email for the form and sent it, along with our Position Paper, to my locally elected officials (mayor and city council, county commissioner, school board, and county sheriff). I shared this information with the entire group and urged them to do the same. The image above includes several of the key leaders that we worked with from common-sense gun law groups.

- **Ordinances from the cities of St. Paul and Edina to ban the possession of assault weapons:**<sup>7</sup> The City of St. Paul took local action a step further than passing a non-binding resolution or a mayoral statement that call for a state ban. On 11/12/2025, the City Council unanimously adopted an ordinance that banned the possession of assault weapons in the city. This is significantly stronger than all prior and current assault weapon bans (refer to Strategy 5 below). Since Minnesota Statute § 471.633 from 40 years ago preempts local governments from regulating guns, the ordinance states it will only go into effect when the state preemption is lifted. On 1/202026, the City of Edina adopted a similar ordinance.

During St. Paul's public hearing process prior to the adoption of the ordinance, member Ed Lorenz collaborated with Kathleen Doyle Anderson and Emily Benzie from Moms Demand Action to testify in favor of the ordinance before the City Council on 11/5/25. Exhibit F includes Ed's speech and also the excellent speech from Gretchen Damon, St. Paul Moms Demand Action.

- **Connor, St. Anthony Village, and the Lutheran Synod:** With his inspiring grandson, Connor, by his side, Dave Borton and Connor testified in favor of the St. Paul ordinance on 11/5/25. They also led the effort to get their city, St. Anthony Village, to adopt a resolution based on the one adopted by the City of West St. Paul in support of a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons. Exhibit E includes the speech Dave and Connor gave to the St. Anthony Village City Council. The city later adopted the resolution.



Recently, Dave and Connor met with their Lutheran bishop. As Dave described it, "[we] asked for 15 minutes. She gave us 40 and used the entire time to dialogue with Connor about his sense of gun control, etc. She concluded the meeting by asking Connor to prepare a resolution for May's assembly of 108 congregations and 980,000 Lutherans. She said, 'Connor, will you also speak to the assembly? You have something to say!' The resolution Connor has in mind is mobilizing those nearly 1 million Lutherans in the pews to contact their legislators re: banning assault weapons and

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<sup>7</sup> If the state preemption law is rescinded, the ordinance will: Ban public possession of assault weapons and large-capacity magazines and binary triggers within city limits. Require all firearms to have a serial number and prohibit untraceable ghost guns. Restrict firearms in sensitive public City-owned, leased, or controlled spaces including parks, libraries, and recreation centers. Ensure clear signage at City-owned, leased, and controlled facilities to inform residents and encourage compliance. Establish penalties for violations and authorize enforcement by local public safety officials upon the contingent enactment.



high-capacity magazines. He also wants some statements about other gun control/violence. We began working on the resolution yesterday.”

Connor is also our newest associate member of Veterans For Peace and, at 11 years old, probably our youngest. The above photo on the left shows MN Sen. Matt Klein, in red shirt, greeting Connor at the Youth United for Gun Violence Prevention Rally held at the Capitol on 9/1/2025. The above photo on the right shows Dave presenting our thank you certificate to his grandson.

**4. Submissions to the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group:** Concern over the Annunciation School shooting caused Senate DFL leaders to create the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group, which had Sen. Ron Latz (DFL) as the chair, Sen. Zaynab Mohamed (DFL) as the vice chair, and 5 other members from both parties. The group asked for “proposals” so, I submitted one on 9/16/25 ([Exhibit G](#)). Jim McKenzie and I attended the hearing of the group on 9/17/25. I also submitted a request to the chairs and co-chairs of the public safety committees to testify on two new pieces of relevant information: The lethality of AR-15 assault-style weapons and the effectiveness of state assault weapon bans. I also shared the information with the key leaders of the gun control groups ([Exhibit H](#)).

**5. Analysis of the Proposed Bill by Minnesota Senator Zaynab Mohamed:** Sen. Zaynab Mohamed made public a bill for a state ban (Mohamed bill). I prepared a paper that described the Republican positions on a state ban, analyzed Sen. Mohamed’s bill, and included six changes to minimize the bill’s impact on law-abiding assault weapon owners while maximizing its ability to restrict access to these weapons for potential mass shooters ([Exhibit I](#)). My analysis is rich in information about the perspectives, concerns, and fears of law-abiding owners of assault weapons as well as their alternatives to a state ban.

The call-out box summarizes the primary impacts the bill. After 1/1/2027, the owner of a legally acquired assault weapon or high-capacity magazine could continue to possess and use the weapon for as long as they live, provided they remain “law-abiding,” store the weapon consistent with current law, and register it. The most significant change is that they would not be able to transfer the weapon, even via inheritance. If they became ineligible (e.g., were convicted of a crime of violence), they would have to either surrender it to the appropriate law enforcement agency, modify it to make it inoperable, or remove it from the state. Note that it

**If approved, the Mohamed bill would have the following impacts as of 1/1/2027 on an owner of a legally acquired assault weapon:**

- They could choose to register it, and store and fire it consistent with the law.
- They could choose to surrender it to the appropriate law enforcement agency, modify the device to make it inoperable, or remove it from the state.
- They would not be able to transfer it. *Transfer* means a sale, gift, loan, assignment, or other delivery to another. This includes inheritance.
- Persons who inherit a banned weapon must surrender it to the appropriate law enforcement agency, modify the device to make it inoperable, or remove it from the state.

This report includes suggested changes that minimize the impacts of a ban on current law-abiding owners, yet still retain the main purpose of the ban, which is to maximize the difficulty of obtaining these weapons by potential mass shooters:

1. Split out the ban on high-capacity magazines so it might have a chance at adoption even if the ban on assault weapons doesn’t.
2. Don’t grandfather high-capacity magazines.
3. Add a buyback program just for high-capacity magazines (Attachment 2 includes a bill for a buyback program for both assault weapons and high-capacity magazines).
4. Amend the regulations governing firing ranges and sport shooting events to accommodate weapons banned by the bill.
5. Rely on current safe-storage regulations instead of the more rigid ones in the bill.
6. Expand transfer exceptions to reduce the impact on law-abiding owners.

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does not ban possession like the ordinance passed by the City of St. Paul. The box also lists my 6 recommended changes to the bill.<sup>8</sup>

**6. Winning over “moderate” legislators:** The 10/3/2025 issue of the *Star Tribune* included an article that described six “moderate” legislators, representing swing districts, who have yet to commit either way on the issue. We decided to try to get meetings with them. On 10/10/25, Jayne Tiedemann and Brie Ehrmann from Moms Demand Action and I had an hour-long Zoom meeting with Sen. Matt Klein. We wanted his advice regarding how best to discuss the issue with these legislators. Sen. Klein also suggested additional legislators to approach. Later we learned about four Republican legislators who have decided not to seek reelection to the Legislature. I sent email requests and a follow-up phone call requesting a 15-minute meeting to a total of 17 legislators. I also included my analysis of the Mohamed bill. The table below lists the 41 DFL legislators who have met with us and stated their support for a ban (20 senators and 21 representatives). The table also lists the 4 legislators we met with who were non-committal or opposed, and Rep. Danny Nadeau (R) who said he would support a ban on high-capacity magazines and possibly an assault weapons ban if it was packaged with other gun violence prevention measures. The last column in the table lists the 2 legislators who refused to meet with us and the 11 who have not yet responded to our requests. We will keep trying to arrange meetings with them.

Legislators Who Met With Us Regarding a Ban on Assault Weapons			Legislators We've Contacted But Did Not Grant a Meeting	
Stated Support		Opposed, Non-committal, or Only Support Ban on HC Magazines		Comments
DFL Senators	DFL Representatives			
Sen. Esther Agbaje	Rep. Kaela Berg, 577	Sen. Jim Abeler, (R) Anoka, non-committal	Sen. Gary Dahms (R)	Not seeking reelection
Sen. Liz Boldon, 3201	Rep. Mary Francis Clardy	Sen. Julia Coleman, (R) Waconia, opposed	Sen. Rich Draheim (R) Madison Lake	Not seeking reelection
Sen. Jim Carlson, 3221	Rep. Nathan Coulter, 569	Sen. Rob Kupek (DFL) Morehead, may support if "packaged"	Sen. Steve Drazkowski, (R) Zumbrota	Not seeking reelection. Not willing to meet.
Sen. Steve Cwodzinski, 3207	Rep. Heather Edelson, 549	Sen. Grant Hauschild, (DFL) Duluth, non-committal	Sen. Zach Duckworth (R) Lakeville	Kelly B. and John Barden have asked for a meeting
Sen. Scott Dibble, 3107	Rep. Leigh Finke, 423	Rep. Danny Nadeau, (R) Rogers, supports ban on HC magazines	Sen. Nick A. Frentz, (DFL) St. Peter	
Sen. Heather Gustafson, 3103	Rep. Michael Freiberg, 381		Sen. John A. Hoffman, (DFL) Brooklyn Park	
Sen. Matt Klein, 2105	Rep. Kaohly Her, 359		Sen. Jeff Howe (R)	Not seeking reelection
Sen. Ron Latz, 3108	Rep. Joshua Hill, 415		Sen. Karin Housley, (R) Stillwater to Forest Lake	Dr. Lawrence Conden has asked for a meeting
Sen. Alice Mann, 3225	Rep. Michael Howard		Sen. Jeremy Miller (R) Winona	Not seeking reelection
Sen. John Marty, 3235	Rep. Athena Hollins, 471		Rep. Tim O'Driscoll (R)	Not seeking reelection
Sen. Erin Maye Quade, 3227	Rep. Frank Hornstein, 563		Sen. Judy Seeberger, (DFL) Hastings to Lake Elmo	
Sen. Jennifer McEwen, 3217	Rep. Samakab Hussein, 521		Rep. Paul Torkelson (R)	Not seeking reelection
Sen. Zaynab Mohamed, 2103	Rep. Erin Koegel, 445		Rep. Lisa Demuth (R), Cold Spring	Not willing to meet
Sen. Kelly Morrison, 3205	Rep. Alicia Kozlowski, 429		Rep. Elliott Engen (R) White Bear Township	
Sen. Erin Murphy, 3211	Rep. Larry Kraft, 515		Rep. Ron Kresha (R) Little Falls	
Sen. Clair Oumou Verbeten, 2101	Rep. Jerry Newton, 367		Rep. Andrew Myers (R) Minnetonka	
Sen. Sandy Pappas, 2113	Rep. Maria Isa Pérez-Vega, 583		Rep. Kristin Robbins (R) Maple Plain	
Sen. Lindsey Port, 3213	Rep. David Pinto, 503		Sen. Bill Weber (R)	Not seeking reelection
Sen. Arie Putnam, St. Cloud	Rep. Lucy Rehm, 533			
Sen. Ann Rest, 328 Capitol	Rep. Samantha Sencer-Mura, 417			
	Rep. Bianca Virnig, 404			
20	21	5	18	
Total legislators visited:	46			
In support	41			
Opposed, non-committal, or HC magazines only	5			
Total legislators contacted	64			

After the Annunciation School/Church shooting, the murders of former Speaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, and the near fatal wounding of Rep. John Hoffmann and his wife, passionate public

<sup>8</sup> I am seeking a meeting with Sen. Mohamed to discuss my analysis and recommendations.

demands peaked in the Fall for the Legislature to do *something* to curb gun violence, and especially to ban assault weapons. Many community leaders pointed out that the plague of gun violence is the leading cause of death for American youth.<sup>9</sup> In response to the media featuring heartrending stories from the parents of victims of the Annunciation School shooting, the *Star Tribune* article included Sen. Judy Seeberger's comment (DFL-Afton) that we need to "dial back the inflammatory rhetoric."

To best utilize the so-called veteran "cloak of legitimacy," we brought a balanced approach to our meetings with legislators that accounted for the concerns of law-abiding owners of legally obtain assault weapons. We told the legislators that we understood that most owners were also deeply concerned about reducing gun violence and especially its effects on our children. Rather than "blame" the weapons, however, they insist that other factors like mental health and unsafe schools are actually at the root of mass shootings at schools. (Exhibit C includes more information why many gun owners believe that assault weapon bans demonize AR-15-style rifles, and penalize them.) We knew that most believe that the Second Amendment protects their weapons, and that they feel unjustly blamed for gun crimes committed by others. Most incorrectly believe the bans considered by the Legislature require confiscation when, in fact, they require registration. For those who understand the bills correctly, they still see registration as just a step towards confiscation.

To the common arguments that "guns don't kill people; people kill people," which leads to the need for more mental health resources instead of bans, I described what I learned at the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group hearing on 9/17/25. Based on the comments by the five Republicans at the hearing, the Republican caucus will not collaborate with Democrats on any issue that affects legal gun owners (e.g., bans on weapons, magazines, or binary triggers; red flag and safe storage laws; closing loopholes in background checks and for ghost guns, registration, etc.). They opposed every DFL proposal that involved funding because, given the state's budget deficit (which they blamed on the DFL trifecta of the prior two legislative sessions), they had higher priorities for state spending. Exhibit C includes information that exposes the hypocrisy of this argument.

For each of our meetings, we briefly stated our position in favor a state ban. Rather than begin with arguments to support our position, we asked the legislator to describe their concerns and those of their constituents who oppose a state ban, and then we responded with our counter arguments. This approach set the tone for a calmer discussion. In every case, we felt respected and heard (again, that "veteran cloak of legitimacy"). Here are a few takeaways:

- Our "asks" at first were 1) communicate your concerns with Sen. Zaynab Mohamed about her bill, and 2) if you can't vote by pushing the green button (YES) on this issue, at least don't push the red button (NO). One legislator informed us that neither of our "asks" are possible. He explained that the gun-rights voters would condemn him just as fully for a "yes" vote as for not voting.
- All 4 legislators agreed that the primary concerns of most gun-rights voters are 1) that bans are ineffective; 2) that their weapons are protected by the Second Amendment and they are not

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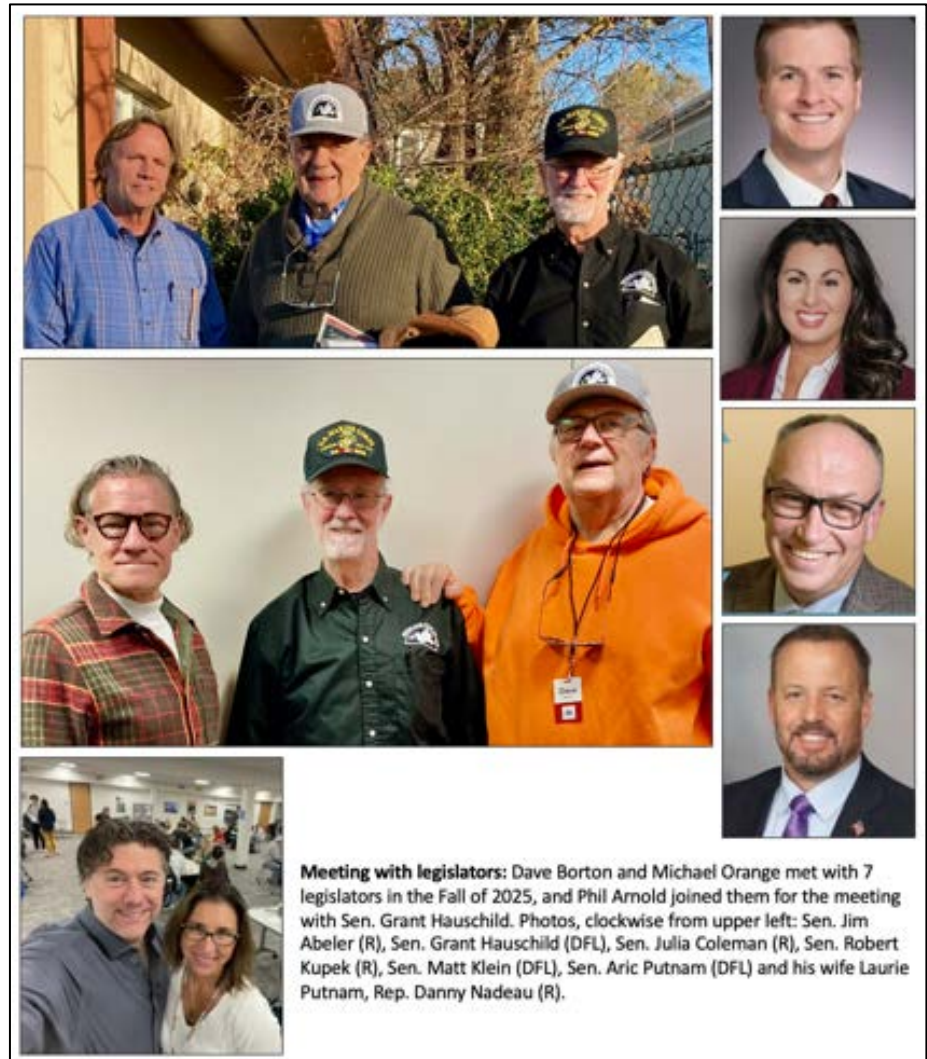
<sup>9</sup> Source: "Preventing firearm violence and injuries impacting children and teens," Centers for Disease Control, 12/16/24, <https://www.cdc.gov/firearm-violence/php/research-summaries/children-and-teen-impacts.html#:~:text=Introduction,19%20in%202020%20and%202021>.



“weapons of war;” and 3) that they need them to defend themselves, their families, and their property in the event the government attempts to confiscate them, or attack their civil and property rights. Exhibit C addresses all of these concerns (see pp. 4-10).

- One legislator believed the gun-rights voters in his district would adamantly oppose a ban on transfers. He had recently received his grandfather’s hunting rifle, and understood peoples’ *reverence* (my word) for firearms that have been handed down through generations. Exhibit I includes a discussion how the Mohamed bill could be modified to reduce the impact of the ban on transfers on law-abiding people.
- Two legislators suggested “packaging” the bill with things Republicans believe would be more effective at curbing gun violence (e.g., increased mental health resources, improved school safety, and increased penalties for general gun assaults). Governor Walz’s September proposal for a special session listed 9 policies and appropriations that he wanted approved during the session. All three of the legislators’ suggested measures were included in the Governor’s proposal.

Of the 6 legislators we met with this Fall (3 DFL and 3 Republicans), only Sen. Aric Putnam (DFL) committed to supporting an assault weapon ban like Sen. Mohamed’s bill. However, Sen. Rob Kupek (DFL) and Rep. Danny Nadeau (R) stated they may support such a ban if the bill included other measures intended to reduce gun violence. Also, Rep. Nadeau stated he supports a stand-alone ban on high-capacity magazines. We believe putting rock-solid information into the hands of the 22 targeted legislators and meeting with the 5 who might still be convinced, especially the 2 Blue Dog Democrats, may have unknown positive impacts. As Mahatma Gandhi said, “You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result.” Since the Republicans have only a one-vote majority in the entire Legislature, flipping just a few votes might make all the difference



needed. And we're not giving up yet. We will continue to seek meetings with the rest of our targeted legislators.

## 7. Other actions:

- **Statewide Gun Violence Prevention Coalition Meeting:** Ed Lorenz represented our group when we were invited to participate in the four-hour-long Statewide Gun Violence Prevention Coalition Meeting on 10/23/2025 and the one on 1/28/2026. Exhibit K includes his report.
- **Fox News article and interview:** The local Fox News TV station website included comments from the Minnesota Gun Owners Caucus (MGOC). In response, I submitted a letter to the station (Exhibit L). I prepared responses to the MGOC comments for others to submit letters to Fox News, and shared it with our group and with the key leaders of gun control groups. The station neither published it nor even acknowledged its receipt.
- **Interview for *The Minnesota Daily*:** On 11/6/2025, Grace Praxmarer, a journalism student at the U of M, interviewed me for 45 minutes for an article she wrote for the University's *The Minnesota Daily* where she is an editor.

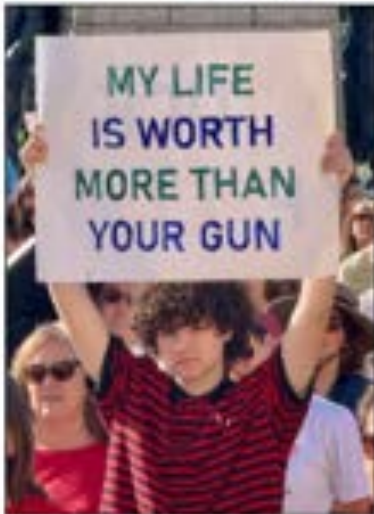
- **Membership list and new members:** Three veterans joined the group: Allen Frechette, Edward Lorenzo, and Andrew Roussopoulos, which brought the total number of members to 31.

### 2026 Membership List, Sane Gun Laws Group (31 members)

David Anderson, Army	Edward Lorenz, Army
Phillip Arnold, Army	Michael Madden, Army
Kelly Bankole, Air Force	James McKenzie, Army
Bruce Berry, Army	Michael McDonald, Army National Guard
John Barden, associate member	Bob Mokos, Air Force
David Borton, Air Force	Michael Orange, Marine Corps
Lawrence Condon, DDS., Navy	Diana Oestreich, Army National Guard
Michael Doyle, Army	John Clark Pegg, Marine Corps
Jack Fecht, Army	Hilary Ray, Army
Loren Flicker, Army	Robert Regnell, Air Force
Allen Frechette, Air Force	Barry Riesch, Army
Richard Guiton, M.D., Army	William Ronan, Marine Corps
Robert Hale, Army	Andrew Roussopoulos, Marine Corps
Aryls Herem, Army	Jacob Thomas, Air Force
Larry Johnson, Army	John Varone, Army
David Logsdon, Navy	



EXHIBIT A



9/1/25 Youth United for Gun Violence Prevention Rally (upper left): Participants included Mike McDonald (in shorts and hat in foreground), Ariys Herem, Kelly Bankole, Cynthia and Michael Orange, and Dave Borton and his grandson, Connor.



9/27/25 Don't Look Away Rally sponsored by Moms Demand Action et. al. Michael Orange was one of the speakers (photo above Cynthia Orange).c. Jessica DeWeerth (right photo) from Every Town for Gun Safety, was an event organizer.





EXHIBIT B

**Speech at the Moms Demand Action Rally at the Capitol, 9/27/2025**

Michael Orange, Coordinator, Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws  
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Good morning.

It's an honor to stand with you. Since 2018, my group, Chapter 27, Veterans For Peace, has been advocating at the Legislature for a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Over those many legislative sessions, we've joined members of Moms Demand Action, Every Town for Gun Safety, Protect Minnesota, Giffords, and others to pass sane gun laws. I want to address four examples of the misinformation and lies from the gun lobby so you can respond authoritatively when you hear them.

**1. Civilian assault rifles are not “weapons of war:”** The gun lobby is fond of saying “civilian” assault rifles aren't “weapons of war.”

I call BS!

When firing either military or civilian ammunition, the civilian AR-15 is actually more powerful than the military's standard-issue, M4.<sup>10</sup> What is more important is that the bullets from this ammunition can tumble upon impact, which makes them horribly deadly. Hearing the courageous testimony from the parents of the shooting victims at Annunciation School and Church just brings me to tears. I also know, first-hand, the carnage these weapons of war cause. I saw their horrible effects when I served in combat in Vietnam.

I'm still haunted by the vivid memory of two young Vietnamese boys who set off a bomb on our fire support base. I witnessed, up close, how the assault rifle rounds fired by my fellow Marines literally shredded and exploded their little bodies.

Consider that the parents of the massacred Robb Elementary students in Uvalde Texas had to rely on DNA to identify their children. The gunman at a Las Vegas concert in 2017 fired 1,000 rounds in 10 minutes, murdering 60 people and causing nearly 900 casualties.<sup>11</sup>

**2. “It's not a gun issue; it's a mental health issue:** A second common lie is “Guns don't kill people; people kill people,” or “it's not a gun issue; it's a mental health issue.”

I call BS!

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<sup>10</sup> The only significant difference between military and civilian assault rifles is that military rifles are capable of automatic fire while civilian rifles are restricted to semiautomatic fire (one round per trigger pull). However, the primary value of firing on automatic is for suppressive fire on the battlefield to enable maneuvering. It has no value for legal uses by civilians (i.e., target shooting, hunting, and self-defense). When firing either military or civilian ammunition, AR-15-style rifles are actually more powerful than the military's standard M4 assault rifle that replaced the M16. The muzzle velocity of an AR-15 is not significantly different than for an M16 for both 5.56 NATO rounds and .223 Remington; and it has a greater muzzle velocity than the M4—7% greater firing 5.56 NATO and 4% greater firing .223 Remington.

<sup>11</sup> Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017\\_Las\\_Vegas\\_shooting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_Las_Vegas_shooting)

Claiming it's a mental health issue is just a dodge. Of course, we need improved mental health resources. But that's a separate issue. With the crucial votes from Minnesota's entire Republican delegation, Republicans in Congress cut \$11.4 billion from various mental health services initiated under the Biden Administration.<sup>12</sup> Blaming inadequate mental health services is just bait-and-switch propaganda from the gun lobby. It's about the guns.

**3. "Weapon bans are ineffective:"** A third lie from the gun lobby is that weapon bans are ineffective. I call BS again!

Evidence shows state bans can lower the rate of mass shooting deaths by 70%, and reduce the number of school shooting victims by 54%.<sup>13, 14</sup>

**4. Registration not confiscation:** Finally, the gun lobby also contends that a ban penalizes law-abiding, assault-weapon owners. The NRA calls it a "radical gun-grab."<sup>15</sup> To that, let's ALL say "I call BS!"

The bills introduced in the Legislature for several years now have very limited effects on current owners. They grandfather existing legal weapons, and require registration not confiscation.

**Support is mounting:** Support keeps growing. Last week, over 60 organizations issued a call to action for the Governor and Legislature.<sup>16</sup> Organizations that represent over 14,000 physicians specifically called for an assault weapons ban.<sup>17</sup>

**In closing:** I thank you all for your total dedication to this noble cause. Combined, our voices will ring out—a sonic boom that will pressure our Legislators to improve gun safety for all of us—but especially for our children and grandchildren.

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<sup>12</sup> "NAMI Statement on Final Passage of Bill Cutting Medicaid for Millions of American," National Alliance on Mental Illness, 7/3/2025, [https://www.nami.org/press-releases/nami-deep-concern-over-final-passage-of-bill/#:~:text=NAMI%20Statement%20on%20Final%20Passage,Alliance%20on%20Mental%20Illness%20\(NAMI](https://www.nami.org/press-releases/nami-deep-concern-over-final-passage-of-bill/#:~:text=NAMI%20Statement%20on%20Final%20Passage,Alliance%20on%20Mental%20Illness%20(NAMI)

<sup>13</sup> Source: "The effects of state and Federal gun control laws on school shootings," Mark Gius, Applied Economics Letters, 4/19/2027, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13504851.2017.1319555>

<sup>14</sup> Source: "Policies That Reduce Gun Violence: Restricting Large Capacity Magazines," Daniel Webster, Johns Hopkins University, 5/24, 2021, <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2021/policies-that-reduce-gun-violence-restricting-large-capacity-magazines/#:~:text=Our%20estimate%20was%20that%20laws,is%20licensing%20for%20firearm%20purchasers%20>.

<sup>15</sup> Source: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DO9YkDXEw70/>

<sup>16</sup> Source: [https://assets.senate.mn/working\\_group/2025-2026/1605\\_Senate\\_Gun\\_Violence\\_Prevention\\_Working\\_Group/Gun-Violence-Prevention-Letter-to-Gov-Walz-and-Legislative-Leaders.pdf](https://assets.senate.mn/working_group/2025-2026/1605_Senate_Gun_Violence_Prevention_Working_Group/Gun-Violence-Prevention-Letter-to-Gov-Walz-and-Legislative-Leaders.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Source: <https://www.senate.mn/schedule/senate/20250917>

EXHIBIT C



## Veterans For Peace Chapter 27 612-821-9141

200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 7 Website: [vfpchapter27.org](http://vfpchapter27.org)  
Minneapolis MN 55407 Email: [vfpchapter27@gmail.org](mailto:vfpchapter27@gmail.org)

### A Guide for Supporting a State Ban on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

Michael Orange, Coordinator, Chapter 27 Veteran For Peace, Sane Gun Laws,<sup>18</sup>  
[orange\\_michael@msn.com](mailto:orange_michael@msn.com), 952-905-1448

Updated: 12/31/25

**Reading time** (excluding the table, footnotes, and the Resources section): about 30 minutes

#### **Contents** (underlined text is hyperlinked to that section)

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#### **Purpose, Basic Assumptions, and Definitions**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is to describe the arguments that support the adoption of a Minnesota law that bans the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. To learn about the primary arguments posed by opponents of such a ban, members of Chapter 27 Veteran For Peace, Sane Gun Laws group met with 48 legislators, including legislators who represent conservative and swing districts. We also researched the information from the Minnesota Gun Owners' Caucus and many other sources.

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<sup>18</sup> Michael Orange serves as the coordinator for the local Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws group. Beginning in 2018, members have advocated at the Legislature for a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Michael served in the Marines including in combat in Vietnam (1969-70).



**Assumed attitude of people supporting a state ban:** The analysis assumes that most supporters of an assault weapons ban are deeply concerned about reducing gun violence and especially its effects on our children. They believe that a ban will make it more difficult for a potential mass shooter to obtain an assault weapon, and that a ban, in conjunction with other common-sense gun control measures, can help reduce the frequency and lethality of gun violence.

**Assumed attitude of people opposing a state ban:** The analysis assumes that most law-abiding owners of legally acquired assault weapons are also deeply concerned about reducing gun violence and especially its effects on our children. However, rather than “blame” the weapons, they insist that other factors, e.g., mental health and unsafe schools, are actually at the root of mass shootings. They argue that addressing those factors is the right approach; not bans. Many feel attacked for defending their perceived, constitutionally protected right to own, use, and protect themselves and their families with these weapons; and they feel unjustly blamed for gun crimes committed by others. Many also believe the ban on transfers unjustly limits a parent’s traditional right to hand down an “heirloom” hunting rifle to their children.

**Assumed characteristics of an assault weapon ban:** Sen. Zaynab Mohamed (63, DFL) submitted a proposed bill, dated 9/11/2025, for a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines (Mohamed bill). If approved, the bill would have the following impacts as of 1/1/2027 on an owner of a legally acquired assault weapon:<sup>19</sup>

- They could choose to register it, and continue to store and fire it consistent with the law for as long as they wish.
- They could choose to surrender it to the appropriate law enforcement agency, modify the device to make it inoperable, or remove it from the state.
- They would not be able to transfer it. *Transfer* means a sale, gift, loan, assignment, or other delivery to another. This includes inheritance.
- A person who inherits a banned weapon must surrender it to the appropriate law enforcement agency, modify the device to make it inoperable, or remove it from the state.
- A person who violates the law “is guilty of a felony and may be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than five years or to payment of a fine of not more than \$25,000 or both.”

**Definitions:**

- **Mass shooting:** When 4 or more persons (excluding the shooter) are wounded or killed with a gun.
- **Civilian assault weapons:** For this report, civilian assault weapons refer to semiautomatic, typically AR-15-style rifles designed to fire high-powered rounds at a greater velocity than most other firearms. When combined with high-capacity magazines, they enable a shooter to fire a devastating number of rounds during a short period.
- **High-capacity magazine:** Capacity of 10 or more rounds.
- **High-powered rounds:** There are a wide variety; however, the most common are the 5.56 mm NATO round and the .223 caliber Remington round.

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<sup>19</sup> Michael Orange prepared a separate report that analyzed the Mohamed bill with a focus on minimizing its impact on law-abiding owners of legal assault weapons, while preserving the main purpose of making it more difficult for potential mass shooters to obtain these weapons (available upon request).

## Ban Opponents' Belief: Bans Demonize AR-15-Style Rifles and Penalize Their Owners

**Many gun owners believe that assault weapon bans demonize AR-15-style rifles, and penalize those who own them:** There is a vibrant subculture of enthusiasts who enjoy modifying and upgrading their AR-15-style rifles, and sharing their experiences with others, much like those who modify cars or computers. They share a passion for the rifle platform's ability to be customized, its technology, and its functionality. They can be offended by the suggestion that there is something inherently immoral about these weapons and their attachment to them.

**Rifle design:** The rifle's design is built around a two-part system—the upper and lower receivers. The lower receiver, which contains the trigger and magazine well, is the serialized component considered to be the actual firearm. The upper receiver contains the barrel, bolt carrier group, and other components of the rifle (diagram at right). With the right tools and experience, a person can swap out for a barrel of a different length, caliber, or configuration. A variety of stocks and accessories are available (e.g., sights, scopes, grips, lasers, flashlights, suppressors, etc.). This flexibility, plus their high accuracy with minimal recoil, make AR-15-style rifles extremely popular for legal uses like sport shooting, small game hunting,<sup>20</sup> and defense. Unfortunately, their ability to accommodate high-capacity magazines, up to 100 rounds each (image at right) makes them the weapon of choice for mass shooters.



**Registration is not a slippery slope to confiscation:** At meetings with legislators, we learned that some gun-rights voters harbor a deep fear and resentment against government, both federal and local. They believe they need their legally obtained assault weapons to defend themselves, their families, and their property in the event a tyrannical government attempts to confiscate their weapons, or attack their civil and property rights. They see registration as a step towards confiscation. I researched the issue, and concluded that a short cartoon filmed in 1969, *Bambi Meets Godzilla*,<sup>21</sup> best describes the chances of success that of an armed insurrection could overthrow the U.S. government: The “Other” section at the end of this report provides more detail.

<sup>20</sup> Compared to the rounds typically used for hunting larger game (e.g., the 30.06 round), the 5.56 NATO round and its civilian companion round, the .223 Remington, are not as effective for larger game (deer, feral pigs, elk, bear, etc.). They lack the 30.06 round's mass and energy, and they are designed to tumble upon impact and fragment. This makes them unsuitable for a “humane” kill at longer distances where preserving the meat is an important purpose of the hunt, but acceptable for destroying small game and varmints.

<sup>21</sup> Refer to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bambi\\_Meets\\_Godzilla](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bambi_Meets_Godzilla)

I don't see registration as a reasonable concern. Since 8/1/2024, the state has required that 1) a buyer of an assault weapons must obtain a Permit to Purchase, which includes a background check, and 2) that the weapon's serial number is recorded by the buyer and seller during the transfer process. I would argue that the state requires registration of vehicles, boats, campers, and even canoes.<sup>22</sup> It's a reasonable requirement that enables the current legal owner to retain their *grandfathered* weapons, and continue to fire them at gun ranges and wherever it is legally allowed.<sup>23</sup>

**Restrictions on transfers vary by state:** As mentioned above, many ban opponents believe the ban on transfers unjustly limits a parent's traditional right to hand down an "heirloom" hunting rifle to their children. Of the ten states that have bans, 3 allow transfers to family members or via a legal will: Connecticut, Washington, and Delaware.<sup>24</sup> The other 7 states with bans and Washington DC prohibit transfers as does the Mohamed bill.

**No shame:** Assuming the Mohamed bill is approved and goes into effect after 1/1/2027, a law-abiding owner will have registered their assault weapons and are storing them appropriately, so there should be no implied shame in obeying the law. Given the flexibility of the AR-15 rifle platform, the Mohamed bill will not affect owners' ability to modify the upper receiver of their grandfathered/registered rifles to fit their changing needs.

### **Ban Opponents' Belief: AR-15-Style Rifles are Not "Weapons of War"**

**Many gun owners believe that AR-15-style rifles are not "weapons of war:"** In order to argue that the Second Amendment protects assault weapons, opponents of banning them must show that they are substantively different than weapons that are "predominantly useful in military service,"<sup>25</sup> i.e., they are not "weapons of war." The history of the AR-15 contradicts that belief. The original ArmaLite AR-15, designed by Eugene Stoner and his team 70 years ago in 1956, was a selective-fire, automatic rifle intended for military use. Later, the Colt Firearms Co. marketed it to the military as the M16 rifle. In

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<sup>22</sup> Minnesota requires vehicle registration (cars, boats, trailers) primarily for public safety, revenue generation (highway funds), and vehicle tracking/ownership verification, ensuring all vehicles on public roads pay taxes, have proper identification (plates/tabs), and are accounted for by the state for law enforcement, licensing, and transportation and budget planning purposes. This process funds road maintenance and establishes legal ownership, making it crucial for operating on public streets and waterways.

<sup>23</sup> In states with assault weapon bans, registering grandfathered weapons (those owned before the ban) serves to track these specific firearms, ensuring they remain in legal possession, preventing them from entering the illegal market, allowing law enforcement to trace crime guns, and often requiring secure storage or background checks for future transfers, ultimately limiting their circulation and future availability without confiscating them from current owners.

<sup>24</sup> The Washington State assault weapons ban (effective 2023) allows a person to inherit an assault weapon and keep it within the state. However, they cannot sell or transfer it to any other person in the state except to a licensed dealer, a gunsmith for repair, or law enforcement. The Connecticut ban allows registered assault weapons (those lawfully owned and registered before the 2013 ban) to be transferred through bequest or intestate succession (inheritance without a will). The individual who inherits the weapon must, within 90 days, apply for a new certificate of possession, render the firearm inoperable, sell it to a licensed dealer, or remove it from the state. The Delaware ban grandfathers assault weapons acquired before the ban (June 30, 2022) and allows them to be transferred to a family member.

<sup>25</sup> Source: <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/554/570/>

1964, Colt redesigned the AR-15 for civilian use as a semi-automatic version of the M16 (one round per trigger pull). The only significant difference between military and civilian assault rifles is that military rifles are capable of automatic fire, while civilian rifles are restricted to semiautomatic fire. However, the primary value of automatic fire is for suppressive fire on the battlefield to enable maneuvering. It has no value for legal uses by civilians (i.e., sport shooting, hunting, and self-defense).

**More powerful:** The table below compares the power and lethality of the two most common rounds (5.56 NATO and .223 Remington, both with 55-grain bullets) as fired by a typical AR-15-style rifle versus the M16 and the M4, which is the military's primary replacement for the M16. When firing either 5.56 NATO or .223 Remington rounds, the muzzle velocity of an AR-15 has a greater muzzle velocity than the M4—7% greater firing 5.56 NATO and 4% greater firing .223 Remington. What is more important is that this ammunition can tumble and fragment upon impact, which makes it horribly deadly. The differences are distinctions without a difference.

Comparison of Lethality of M16, M4, and AR-15 Rounds				
Updated: 10/6/2025				
Round	5.56 NATO (55 grain bullet)			.223 Remington (55 grain bullet)
Weapon	M16	M4	AR-15-Style	AR-15-Style
Barrel length <sup>1</sup>	20"	14.5"	16"	
Compared M16		-28%	-20%	
Compared to M4	38%		11%	
Full automatic <sup>2</sup>	Yes, but value limited to suppressive fire on battlefield		No, but of no value to legal civilian uses, i.e., target shooting, hunting, self defense	
Muzzle velocity (ft. per sec.) <sup>3, 4, 5</sup>	3,100	2,970	3,165	3,090
Compared M16		-4%	2%	-0.3%
Compared to M4	4%		7%	4%
Tumble upon impact (TUI)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Available
<b>Notes:</b>				
1	Barrel length is important because a longer barrel increases a bullet's muzzle velocity by providing more time for a more complete and efficient transfer of energy from the burning propellant to the bullet as the expanding gases push the bullet forward.			
2	The primary value of automatic fire for assault weapons is for suppressive fire to enable maneuvering. The U.S. Army's Rifle and Carbine Training Circular notes, "Automatic and burst fires drastically decrease the probability of hits due to the rapid succession of recoil impulses and the inability of the Soldier to maintain proper sight alignment and sight picture on the target." Source: "Key Points About Assault Weapons," Violence Policy Center, <a href="https://vpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Assault-weapon-primer-2017-VPC.pdf">https://vpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Assault-weapon-primer-2017-VPC.pdf</a>			
3	Source for the M16 and M4: UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS Field Medical Training Battalion – East, Camp Lejeune, FMST 1219, M16/M4 Carbine Service Rifle Familiarization			
4	Source for the rounds fired from an AR-15-style rifle: "5.56 vs .223: Understanding Critical Differences Between 5.56 NATO and .223 Remington Ammunition," Bulk Munitions, <a href="https://bulkmunitions.com/blog/5-56-vs-223-ammo-19-things-you-need-to-know/">https://bulkmunitions.com/blog/5-56-vs-223-ammo-19-things-you-need-to-know/</a>			
5	The casings and 55 grain bullets for the 5.56 NATO and .223 Remington are identical; however, propellants may vary slightly for .223 cartridges. Barrel length is the main determinant for the differences in muzzle velocity. The M16 barrel is 38% longer than the M4 and the rifle's muzzle velocity is 4% larger. The barrel of the typical AR-15-style rifle is 11% longer than the M4, and the muzzle velocity is 7% larger.			

**In sum:** The Supreme Court's Heller decision limits the protections of the Second Amendment to handguns used for self-defense, not weapons of war. And secondly, in terms of lethality, there are no substantive differences between AR-15-style rifles when they are used for legal purposes (i.e., "common uses" including sport shooting, hunting, and self-defense) and the military's standard-issue, M4 assault rifle. As such, the bans adopted by ten states and the District of Columbia have been able to withstand repeated court challenges, and so can a similarly designed ban for Minnesota. (The section below, "Bans are Legal and Minnesotans Want Them," includes more information on the legality of bans.)

**The weapon of choice for mass murderers:** Assault weapons, especially assault rifles, are the weapon of choice for mass murderers, and responsible for most of the devastating mass shootings, including



mass shootings in our schools. The following lists other related aspects of assault weapons and gun violence:

- **Assault rifles are to blame:** An analysis of public mass shootings resulting in 4 or more deaths found that more than 85% of such fatalities were caused by shooters with assault rifles.<sup>26</sup>
- **Rapid fire:** A person firing an AR-15-style rifle can shoot the thirty high-powered rounds in the typical high-capacity magazine in 3-5 seconds.<sup>27</sup>
- **Far more lethal:** Between 2015 and 2022, mass shootings with 4 or more people killed where assault weapons were used resulted in nearly 6 times as many people shot, more than twice as many people killed, and 23 times as many people wounded per incident on average.<sup>28</sup>
- **The Las Vegas massacre:** The gunman at a concert in Las Vegas in 2017 fired more than 1,000 rounds, killing 60 people. Nearly 900 people were injured.<sup>29</sup>
- **Lethality of high-capacity magazines:** Incidents involving a firearm equipped with a high-capacity magazine resulted in nearly 5 times as many people shot, more than twice as many fatalities, and nearly 10 times as many injuries per incident on average compared to those that did not involve the use of high-capacity magazines.<sup>30</sup>
- **High-capacity magazines and crime guns:** Although the gun lobby has argued that these weapons are only used in a small percentage of firearm-related violent crime, a 2018 study estimated that guns equipped with high-capacity magazines account for 22-36% of crime guns in most places, with some estimates upward of 40% for cases involving serious violence, including homicides of law enforcement officers.
- **Leading cause of death for American youth:** The plague of gun violence is the leading cause of death for American youth.<sup>31</sup>
- **No way to tell the difference between a law-abiding gun owner and the shooter:** According to Nick Suplina, senior vice president for law and policy at Everytown for Gun Safety, “41 states allow permitless open carry, and nearly 30 allow permitless concealed carry. This trajectory leads to a society where firearms could be everywhere, and where neither officers nor ordinary citizens can tell the difference between a law-abiding gun owner and the next shooter.”
- **Easy to hide:** The typical AR-15-style rifle weighs about 8 lbs. A shooter could remove the upper receiver from the lower receiver by pushing in two pins, and then reassemble the rifle in a matter of seconds. Their approximate length of 18” of a disassembled rifle would fit in a grocery bag.
- **Most get their weapons from family and friends:** “The US Secret Service has undertaken two studies of targeted school violence, covering nearly 40 years of incidents. They found that three-quarters of school shooters acquired their firearm from the home of a parent or close relative (73 percent in the first study and 76 percent in the second study). The Secret Service’s second study of

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<sup>26</sup> Source: Giffords, [https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/hardware-ammunition/assault-weapons/#footnote\\_1\\_5603](https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/hardware-ammunition/assault-weapons/#footnote_1_5603).

<sup>27</sup> Source: [https://www.stngrusa.com/what-you-need-to-know-about-ar-15-ultimate-resource#:~:text=A:%20The%20time%20it%20\(%20AR%2015,the%20chamber%20in%20less%20than%203%20seconds.](https://www.stngrusa.com/what-you-need-to-know-about-ar-15-ultimate-resource#:~:text=A:%20The%20time%20it%20(%20AR%2015,the%20chamber%20in%20less%20than%203%20seconds.)

<sup>28</sup> Source: Everytown Research and Policy, *ibid*.

<sup>29</sup> Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017\\_Las\\_Vegas\\_shooting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_Las_Vegas_shooting)

<sup>30</sup> Source: Giffords, *ibid*.

<sup>31</sup> Source: “Preventing firearm violence and injuries impacting children and teens,” Centers for Disease Control, 12/16/24, <https://www.cdc.gov/firearm-violence/php/research-summaries/children-and-teen-impacts.html#:~:text=Introduction,19%20in%202020%20and%202021.>

incidents, from 2008 to 2017, revealed that in nearly half of the shootings, the firearm was easily accessible or was not stored securely.”<sup>32</sup>

**The problem is getting worse:** Research suggests that the prevalence of high-capacity magazines in guns used in crimes has grown substantially since the 2004 expiration of the federal prohibition on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.<sup>33</sup> Dr. Laurel Ries, who spoke for the Minnesota Medical Association and the Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians, said firearm deaths have “become an epidemic.”

**What high-powered rounds do to the body:** As mentioned above, most high-powered rounds from AR-15-style assault rifles tumble and fragment upon impact. The following describes their effects on the human body:

- Dr. Peter Rhee compared the damage done by AR-15 bullets and 9mm handgun bullets: “One looks like a grenade went off in there. The other looks like a bad knife cut.”<sup>34</sup>
- An Army medic serving during the Vietnam War described how an M16 round entered an enemy soldier’s left wrist, bore through his arm, chest, torso, and exited out his right thigh.
- Uvalde, TX: “In previously unreleased interviews, police who responded to the Robb Elementary shooting told investigators they were cowed by the shooter’s military-style rifle. This drove their decision to wait for a Border Patrol SWAT team to engage him, which took more than an hour.”<sup>35</sup>
- President Biden: “The damage was so devastating in Uvalde, parents had to do DNA swabs to identify the remains of their children. Nine- and 10-year-old children.”<sup>36</sup> The killer’s assault weapon functioned exactly as designed—to kill and maim as many human beings as possible.
- “AR-15 bullets can penetrate the soft body armor typically worn by police, which is built to stop handgun rounds. The AR-15 bullet ... hits with such force that it tears gaping holes and liquifies vital organs as if a bomb had gone off inside the body.”<sup>37</sup>

## Ban Opponents’ Belief: Bans Are Not Effective

**Opponents say bans are ineffective, but that is not true:** Opponents to bans argue they are ineffective, and that it’s better to focus on improving mental health resources. In fact, studies refute this argument. As the ten states with assault weapons bans have experienced, the frequency and severity of gun violence is dramatically reduced when it becomes illegal to buy or transfer these weapons. Bans are effective, especially if they are part of a comprehensive set of common-sense gun

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<sup>32</sup> Source: <https://everytownresearch.org/report/how-to-stop-shootings-and-gun-violence-in-schools/>

<sup>33</sup> Source: Giffords, *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> Source: “What an AR-15 Can Do to the Human Body: When a patient is shot by an AR-15, it ‘looks like a grenade went off in there,’” Sarah Zhang, *Wired*, 6/17/16, <https://www.wired.com/2016/06/ar-15-can-human-body/>

<sup>35</sup> Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/03/20/uvalde-shooting-police-ar-15/>

<sup>36</sup> Source: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/06/02/remarks-by-president-biden-on-gun-violence-in-america/#:~:text=The%20damage%20was%20so%20devastating,and%20those%20under%20restraining%20orders.>

<sup>37</sup> Source: “A ‘good guy with a gun’ doesn’t stand much of a chance against an AR-15 style rifle and body armor,” Ralph A. Weber, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 6/14/2022.

control regulations (e.g., red flag; safe storage; and closed loopholes for background checks, gun show sales, and ghost guns).

**State bans are effective:** States with restrictions on magazine size experience mass shootings at less than half the rate of states without restrictions.<sup>38</sup> There are numerous studies that confirm that the federal assault weapons ban (1994-2004) was effective. Studies concluded that the risk of dying in a mass shooting was 70% lower than in the following decade after Congress killed the effort to extend it.<sup>39</sup> According to a study published in *Applied Economics Letters*, “[I]t was found that assault weapons bans in the states that approved them reduced the number of school shooting victims by 54.4%.”<sup>40</sup> Similarly, a Johns Hopkins University study stated, “We found very encouraging effects. ... On a per capita basis, we see a 70% lower rate of individuals killed in mass shootings associated with state bans of [high-capacity magazines].”<sup>41</sup>

**No “magic bullet:”** No legislation will ever stop illegal gun sales. That's up to law enforcement and the courts,

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<sup>38</sup> Source: Louis Klarevas, Andrew Conner, and David Hemenway, “The Effect of Large-Capacity Magazine Bans on High-Fatality Mass Shootings, 1990–2017,” *American Journal of Public Health* 109, no. 12 (2019): 1754–61, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305311>).

<sup>39</sup> Source: “Did the assault weapons ban of 1994 bring down mass shootings? Here’s what the data tells us,” Michael J. Klein, Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, New York University, *The Conversation*, 6/8/22, <https://theconversation.com/did-the-assault-weapons-ban-of-1994-bring-down-mass-shootings-heres-what-the-data-tells-us-184430>

<sup>40</sup> Source: “The effects of state and Federal gun control laws on school shootings,” Mark Gius, *Applied Economics Letters*, 4/19/2027, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13504851.2017.1319555>

<sup>41</sup> “Policies That Reduce Gun Violence: Restricting Large Capacity Magazines,” Daniel Webster, *Johns Hopkins University*, 5/24, 2021, <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2021/policies-that-reduce-gun-violence-restricting-large-capacity-magazines#:~:text=Our%20estimate%20was%20that%20laws,is%20licensing%20for%20firearm%20purchasers%20>.

## Bans are Legal and Minnesotans Want Them

**Heller v. District of Columbia:** On June 26, 2008, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed by a vote of 5 to 4 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in *Heller v. District of Columbia*, and established that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess firearms for self-defense in the home.<sup>42</sup> The Court also specified that this protection extends to “arms” in common use for lawful purposes, such as self-defense, and that handguns are “arms” for the purposes of the Second Amendment. The decision carved out exceptions for “dangerous and unusual weapons” that are “predominantly useful in military service.”<sup>43</sup> In addition to the District of Columbia, the following ten states have bans on the sale of assault weapons including AR-15-style rifles and high-capacity magazines: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Washington. While Colorado, Oregon, and Vermont do not ban assault weapons, they have enacted bans on high-capacity magazines.

**Bans have withstood court challenges:** Since the adoption of the first state ban almost four decades ago (California, 1989), bans have survived court challenges. Since the U.S. Supreme Court has declined to hear appeals challenging the assault weapon bans in the following states, this has upheld lower court rulings that substantiated the constitutionality of state bans: Connecticut, New York, Maryland, Illinois, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia.

**Minnesota voters and organizations want a ban:** A 2022 poll found that 54% of Minnesota voters wanted a ban on assault weapons, and 57% favored stopping the sale of high-capacity magazines.<sup>44</sup> Gov. Walz has also voiced his strong support<sup>45, 46</sup> Recently, 10 organizations stated support for a state ban for the 9/15/25 hearing of the Minnesota Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group, including 3 medical groups with a total of 14,000 members, and the following:<sup>47</sup>

- Children’s Defense Fund Minnesota
- Minnesota Parent-Teacher Associations
- School psychologists, Jessie Kember, Ph.D., Anna Li, Ph.D., and Mollie Weeks, Ph.D.
- Multicultural Autism Action Network
- Protect Minnesota
- Giffords Law Center

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<sup>42</sup> Thom Hartmann argues in *The Hidden History of Guns and the Second Amendment* that the Second Amendment was originally intended to prevent standing armies, not to guarantee an individual right to bear arms for self-defense. He claims the amendment’s purpose was later reshaped to maintain the institution of slavery through armed slave patrols and to facilitate the genocide of Native Americans. Hartmann highlights how the National Rifle Association and conservative courts, like with the *Heller* decision, distorted the amendment’s original meaning to create the modern gun rights framework and to break the power of the gun lobby.

<sup>43</sup> Source: <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/554/570/>

<sup>44</sup> Source: “New MinnPost poll shows majority support for stronger gun laws in the state following Uvalde massacre,” Greta Kaul, *MinnPost*, 06/10/2022, <https://www.minnpost.com/politics-policy/2022/06/new-minnpost-poll-shows-majority-support-for-stronger-gun-laws-in-the-state-following-uvalde-massacre/>

<sup>45</sup> Source: “Walz makes gun control central to pitch for third term: In Congress, Gov. Tim Walz received an “A” rating from the NRA. Now he wants action to curb gun violence,” Allison Kite, *Minnesota Star Tribune*, 9/17/2025, <https://www.startribune.com/a-look-at-walzs-political-evolution-on-guns-as-he-launches-governor-bid/601475196>

<sup>46</sup> Source: <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2025/09/19/gov-walz-interview-running-for-third-term>

<sup>47</sup> Source: <https://www.senate.mn/schedule/senate/20250917>



- Moms Demand Action

**Effectiveness of buy-back programs:** According to an article in *The Journalist's Resource*, "On their own, buybacks might not be effective if the goal is to use them to directly reduce violent crime. But research shows buybacks can help if they're part of a broader effort to reduce gun violence. They can also influence public perception of how authorities are dealing with gun violence and serve as opportunities to educate communities about gun violence reduction strategies, according to researchers."<sup>48</sup> Also, a voluntary buy-back program can minimize the economic impact of the ban.

## **Ban Opponents' Belief: It's a Mental Health Issue, not a Gun Issue**

**Opponents argue that guns are not the problem; mental health is:** As mentioned above, opponents argue that it's not a gun issue; it's a mental health issue. However, the United States is not the only country with mental illness, domestic violence, violent video games, or hate-fueled ideologies; but our gun homicide rate (all gun homicides, not just mass shootings) is 26 times higher than our peer countries.<sup>49</sup> The difference is easy access to guns. In fact, even within the US, states with weaker gun laws and higher gun ownership rates have higher rates of mass shootings.<sup>50</sup>

**Claiming it's a mental health issue is just a dodge:** Not surprisingly, handguns are the cause of most of the casualties of gun violence; however, since assault weapons with high-capacity magazines are the weapon of choice for most mass shooters, bans can be effective by making it more difficult for potential shooters to obtain these weapons of war. Claiming it's a mental health issue is just a dodge. With the votes of the entire Republican delegation from Minnesota in 2025, Congressional Republicans cut \$11.4 billion from various mental and behavioral health services initiated under the Biden Administration.<sup>51</sup> Blaming inadequate mental health services is just bait-and-switch propaganda from the gun industry and the NRA.

**Trump Administration cuts:** During the previous Biden Administration, a program under the Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3) funded local, community-level initiatives to prevent online radicalization, including in Minnesota (primarily in Minneapolis). The CP3 program emphasizes a public health-informed, "whole-of-society" approach that integrates various community resources to build resilience against radicalization and extremist propaganda. However, the Trump Administration

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<sup>48</sup> Source: "Gun buybacks: What the research says," Clark Merrefield, *The Journalist's Resource*, 10/21/22, <https://journalistsresource.org/health/gun-buybacks-what-the-research-says/#:~:text=Early%20research%20on%20gun%20buybacks,reduction%20strategies%2C%20according%20to%20researchers.>

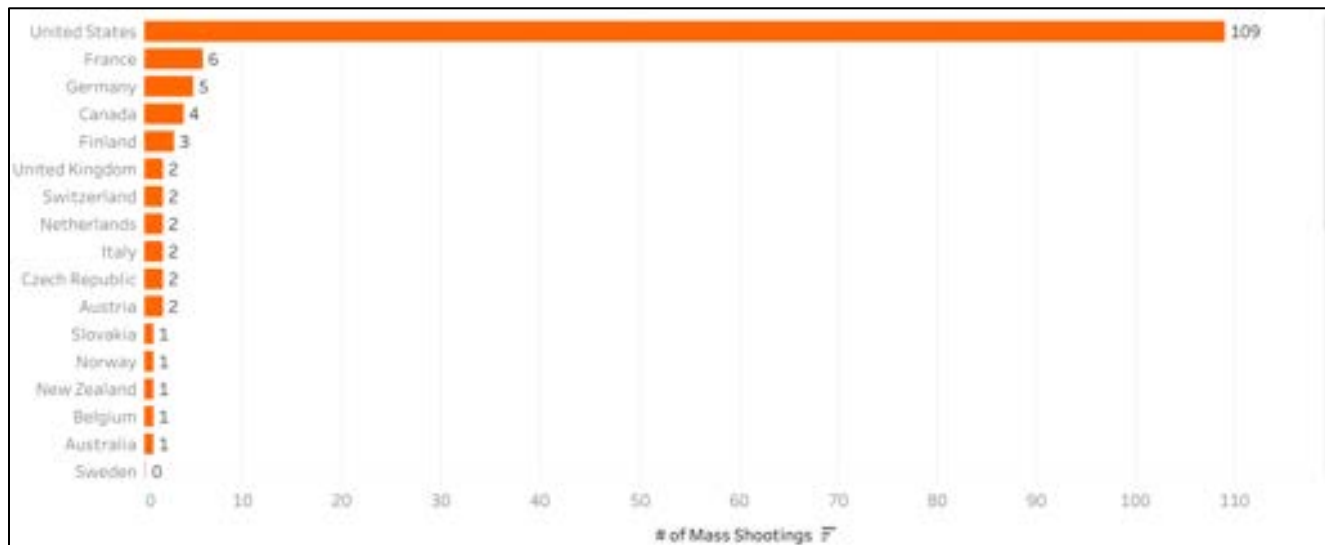
<sup>49</sup> Source: GunPolicy.org

<sup>50</sup> Source: "State Gun Laws, Gun Ownership, and Mass Shootings in the US: Cross Sectional Time Series," Paul M. Reeping et al., *BMJ* 364 (March 2019): 1542, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l542>.

<sup>51</sup> Source: "NAMI Statement on Final Passage of Bill Cutting Medicaid for Millions of American," *National Alliance on Mental Illness*, 7/3/2025, [https://www.nami.org/press-releases/nami-deep-concern-over-final-passage-of-bill/#:~:text=NAMI%20Statement%20on%20Final%20Passage,Alliance%20on%20Mental%20Illness%20\(NAMI\)](https://www.nami.org/press-releases/nami-deep-concern-over-final-passage-of-bill/#:~:text=NAMI%20Statement%20on%20Final%20Passage,Alliance%20on%20Mental%20Illness%20(NAMI))

eliminated funding for grants that had been active under CP3. As a result, Minnesota lost federal violence prevention grants in 2025.<sup>52</sup>

**Our epidemic of mass shootings is a direct result of our lax gun laws:** A 2024 study published by the Rockefeller Institute of Government concluded that the US suffered 109 public mass shootings between 2000 and 2022, compared to a total of 35 in 35 other, similarly developed countries (refer to the below chart).<sup>53</sup> Our health problems aren't 109 times greater than in these 35 other countries. Our epidemic of mass shootings is a direct result of our lax gun laws, and especially our unique availability of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Given that there are more guns in circulation than people in America, if more guns led to fewer violent crimes, America would be the safest place in the world.



**Antidepressants are not at the root of mass shooters:** The gun lobby argues that antidepressants (SSRIs,<sup>54</sup>) are at the root of mass shooters. According to a recent article in *Psychiatric Times*, “[t]here is little or no evidence showing that perpetrators of mass shootings are more likely than those in the general public to have used, or to have been prescribed, antidepressants prior to the shooting.”<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Source: “Trump administration cut funding to shooting prevention programs in Minnesota weeks before school shooting: In Minnesota, \$800,000 in federal grants to local agencies, including the state Department of Public Safety and Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office, were cut last month, undermining efforts to prevent mass violence,” *Independent*, Eric Keller, 8/30/2025, <https://www.the-independent.com/news/world/americas/us-politics/trump-administration-cut-shooting-prevention-minnesota-b2817112.html#>

<sup>53</sup> Source: “Public Mass Shootings Around the World: Prevalence, Context, and Prevention,” Jason R. Silva, 2/20/24, *Rockefeller Institute of Government*, <https://rockinst.org/blog/public-mass-shootings-around-the-world-prevalence-context-and-prevention/>

<sup>54</sup> SSRI stand for Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors, which are a class of medications used to treat mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

<sup>55</sup> Source: “No, Antidepressants Do Not Provoke Mass Shootings,” James L. Knoll IV, MD, Ronald W. Pies, MD, *Psychiatric Times*, 9/12/25, <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/no-antidepressants-do-not-provoke-mass-shootings#>

**The argument that mass shooters are “crazy lone gunmen:”** The internet and the “dark web” have made it much easier for radicalizers to find and identify people who might have feelings of isolation and loneliness, stress, anxiety or rejection; and be easily influenced and drawn into extremist behavior. The argument allows the public and policymakers to avoid more difficult conversations about other, more significant factors that contribute to mass shootings. These include access to firearms, violent political rhetoric, toxic masculinity, social grievances, and the desire for notoriety through copycat acts. The following addresses this false notion:

- **People with mental illness are far more likely to be the victims, not the perpetrators:** A 2023 study published in *Psychiatric Times* found that if all violence attributable to mental disorders were eliminated, 95% to 97% of violent behavior would remain.<sup>56</sup> People with mental illness are far more likely to be the victims of violence than the perpetrators. After a shooting, commentators and media often point to mental health as the central cause. This frame fits the common perception that people with serious mental illness are dangerous, and it provides a simple explanation for incomprehensible violence.
- **The “Lone Gunman” component:** This aspect of the narrative portrays the shooter as an isolated and solitary figure who acts alone, detached from any broader movement or ideology. This framing focuses solely on individual pathology rather than systemic issues.

## Impact on Law-Abiding Owners

**Minimal impact on current law-abiding owners of assault weapons:** Opponents argue that a ban penalizes law-abiding, assault-weapon owners. The bills introduced in the Legislature for several years now have very limited effects on current law-abiding, legal owners:

- 1) They call for registration not confiscation.
- 2) They would prohibit the transfer or sale of the weapon except to licensed dealers. This includes inheritance.
- 3) They are based on existing bans in ten states, and are consistent with current state and federal laws and regulations.
- 4) Minnesota’s most current, not-yet-approved bills (SF 1596/HF 2449 for 2025) include a statewide buy-back program.

**Current restrictions:** Some owners of legal assault weapon oppose a ban because they believe that once the state knows what they own due to registration, confiscation might follow. However, there are already very specific restrictions in current law regarding the sale, transfer, registration, Universal Background Checks (UBC),<sup>57</sup> record keeping, where the weapons can be carried and stored, and

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<sup>56</sup> Source: “Mass Shootings’ Relationship to Mental Illness,” John J. Miller, MD, *Psychiatric Times*, 2/15/2024, <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/authors/john-j-miller-md>

<sup>57</sup> The National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) identifies individuals who are prohibited from receiving firearms by checking databases that contain information on people who are prohibited under federal or state law. This is done to prevent firearms from being sold to individuals who are legally disqualified, such as those with a felony conviction, a history of domestic violence, being a fugitive, or having a court order restraining them from a partner or child. The system is managed by the FBI and requires a background check when a person attempts to purchase a firearm.

penalties for violating the law.<sup>58</sup> (The section below, “Current Restrictions on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines,” provides more detail.)

**Sane vehicular control vs. sane gun control:** We know that motor vehicle laws save lives. They’ve cut the traffic death toll over the decades by a stunning 90% per mile traveled.<sup>59</sup> Common-sense gun regulations and assault weapons bans also save lives (refer to the section on the effectiveness of assault weapons bans). Car owners must have liability insurance, and their vehicle must be registered and meet safety standards (e.g., seat belts and airbags). Drivers must be trained and pass tests in order to get a license that needs periodic renewal. And they have to abide by traffic laws like speed limits. If a driver has a desire to drive 150 mph, he or she can go to a race track and pay to drive a car built and regulated for that purpose.<sup>60</sup> Minnesota should start treating assault weapons like race cars. Unless you are in law enforcement or the military, it should be illegal to buy one in the future and use it for regular “street use.” Just as race cars are designed to go as fast as possible in the shortest amount of time, assault weapons are designed to kill as many people as possible in the shortest amount of time. You don’t need a race car to go to the grocery store. You don’t need an assault weapon for hunting or self-defense.

**Firing options:** Since current proposed bills that ban assault weapons require registration (i.e., “grandfathering”), not confiscation, current legal owners of assault weapons could continue to fire their weapons at gun ranges and wherever it’s legally allowed. Minnesota allows certain gun ranges to rent, for on-site-use only, a wide range of even fully-automatic, military weapons to people as young as 16 because certain federally licensed dealers are exempt from the state’s general prohibition on these weapons.<sup>61</sup> A bill detailing an assault weapon ban could change the Minnesota regulations for these gun ranges to include on-site rental and use of the weapons included in an assault weapon ban so that those who don’t own a “grandfathered” weapon and are prohibited from buying one after the ban goes into effect could fire them. Thus, a ban would have no effect on legal owners’ rights to fire their weapons, and others could fire them at an appropriately licensed gun range.

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<sup>58</sup> Minnesota does not have a central registry of firearms, so there is no state form that records the serial number of an assault weapon for a state registry. Permits to purchase a “semiautomatic military-style assault weapon” are required in Minnesota because of the state’s universal background check law, which went into effect on 8/1/2023. This law requires a “Permit to Purchase” to buy these firearms, in addition to other types of firearms like pistols. Before this date, a permit was not required. Currently, the serial number is recorded during the transfer process whether the sale is from a federally licensed firearms dealer (FFL) or between private parties. The FFL dealer and both parties of a private purchase will record the permit number and the firearm’s serial number for their internal records, and keep it for at least ten years.

<sup>59</sup> Source: National Safety Council, <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/motor-vehicle/historical-fatality-trends/deaths-and-rates/>

<sup>60</sup> A race car is illegal for road use because it lacks federally mandated features found on street-legal vehicles.

<sup>61</sup> This is made possible by a specific exception in Minnesota Statutes § 609.67. All federally regulated weapons, including machine guns, are also subject to federal law and oversight by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. For example, at Bill’s Gun Shop and Range, shooters 16 & 17 years old must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. This federally licensed range offers over 40 different, fully-automatic machine guns. Source: <https://billsgs.com/rentals/#:~:text=Available%20Firearms-,Range%20Rentals,not%20included%20in%20this%20price.>



## **Ban Opponents' Belief: We Should Harden Schools and Have Armed School Resource Officers or Teachers**

**Armed guards in schools will not deter outside gun violence:** Opponents, including the Minnesota Gun Owners' Caucus, argue that more school resource officers (SROs) and armed guards is the answer to prevent school shootings. This is the statement from the Solutions Not Suspensions Coalition to the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Workgroup, 9/15/25: "We firmly believe that introducing more School Resource Officers (SROs) and armed guards into our educational institutions will not deter outside gun violence. The reality is that school shootings have continued to escalate alongside a national increase in both gun violence and the presence of armed personnel in schools. This correlation suggests that simply adding more firearms to school environments is not an effective preventative measure. Instead, it risks creating a more hostile and intimidating atmosphere for students and staff, while failing to address the root causes of violence. One study found that the death rate during shooting incidents in schools that had an armed guard present was nearly three times as high as during shooting incidents in schools without an armed guard."<sup>62</sup>

**Gun rights groups are not always truthful:** The Minnesota Gun Owners' Caucus submitted a proposal in September 2025 to the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group that supported the following strategies instead of a ban: increased mental health access, fostering community-based interventions, implementing smart security and threat assessment infrastructure. They opposed any strategy that cost state funds or had any impact on legal gun owners. They argued that assault weapon bans are ineffective by stating that California, which has had a ban since 1989, has "experienced more mass shootings than any other state." However, when accounting for mass shootings on a per-capita basis, California is in 27<sup>th</sup> place nationally.<sup>63</sup>

**"Packaging" the assault-weapons ban bill:** Instead of "either/or," a "both/and" approach is best. We should advocate for the assault weapons ban, but also recognize that investments in increased mental health resources, improved school safety (e.g., entrances secured by fob controls), and increased penalties for general gun assaults (not just assault weapons) are needed too.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Source: "Presence of Armed School Officials and Fatal and Nonfatal Gunshot Injuries During Mass School Shootings, United States, 1980-2019," *Students Demand Action*, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2776515>

<sup>63</sup> Source: "These Are the States with the Highest Rates of Mass Shootings," Haley Weiss, *Time Magazine*, 7/26/2023, <https://time.com/6298190/these-are-the-states-with-the-highest-rates-of-mass-shootings/>

<sup>64</sup> Governor Walz's September proposal for a special session listed 9 policies and appropriations that he wanted approved during the session. All three of the above-listed measures were included in the Governor's proposal:

1. Assault weapons and high-capacity magazine ban.
2. Binary trigger ban.
3. Eliminate the ghost gun loophole.
4. Strengthen Extreme Risk Protection Orders, including increased funding for public outreach and education.
5. Expand school safety funding.
6. Increase funding for mental health treatment.
7. Strengthen prohibitions against domestic abusers to ensure they do not have access to firearms (HF 391).
8. Increase criminal penalties for violent offenses committed with a firearm and increased penalties for impersonating a police officer.
9. Increased funding for the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Team.

However, the practice of adding aspects that are not directly related to the purpose of a bill is constrained by the “single subject” clause in the state Constitution. Article 4, Section 17 states that, “No law shall embrace more than one subject, which shall be expressed in its title.” The primary goal of this rule is to prevent “logrolling” (combining unrelated provisions to force a majority vote), and to ensure transparency. It would seem that increased penalties for “general gun assaults” could be added to the Mohamed bill, but adding the funding required for “increased mental health resources and improved school safety” may be prohibited by the Constitution.

## Current Restrictions on Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

**Current restrictions on assault weapons:** It is illegal to transfer military-style assault weapons without a background check. People who are ineligible to possess military-style assault weapons include the following (these are a selection of the general categories that don’t reflect the specifics and exceptions):

- Younger than 18
- Convicted of a crime of violence
- Mentally ill, developmentally disabled, or chemically dependent
- An “illegal alien”
- A veteran with a dishonorable discharge
- A person subject to an “extreme risk” protection order

**Permits vs. registration:** Minnesota does not have a statewide gun registration system. Instead, the state issues two types of permits that affect people, subject to a background check. One allows eligible people to purchase and transfer firearms including assault weapons, and the other allows people to carry handguns on their person (open or concealed) or in a vehicle. Restrictions apply. Long guns (e.g., hunting rifles) and shotguns do not require a permit. The approval of an assault weapon ban would require the creation of a state registry of the firearms a permit holder owns.

**2023 and 2024 legislation:** Democratic Party control of both branches of the Legislature and the Governor’s Office (“DFL trifecta”) enabled the approval of numerous “common-sense” gun control measures:

- **Universal background checks:** This law expanded background check provisions to cover private party transfers of pistols and semiautomatic military-style assault weapons through either a federally-licensed firearms dealer or the transferee permitting process. Both parties must retain a copy of the record of transfer for up to ten years. There are a number of exclusions to this requirement, including but not limited to a private party transfer between immediate family members (spouses, domestic partners, parents, children, siblings, grandparents, or grandchildren). This policy became effective August 1, 2023.
- **Extreme risk protection orders:** This law allowed a family or household member, guardian, chief law enforcement officer, city attorney, or county attorney to petition a court for relief via an extreme risk protection order, if they believe that an individual posed a significant danger of bodily harm to self or others or was at significant risk of suicide by possessing a firearm. If granted by the

court, the individual could be prohibited from possessing a firearm for up to one year, subject to renewal or extension. This policy became effective on January 1, 2024.

- **BCA funding:** This law provided additional funding for the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to fight violent crime and improve lab analysis.
- **Binary trigger ban:** This law banned binary triggers. These are modifications that enable a firearm to fire on both the pull and the release of the trigger.
- **Straw purchase penalties:** A straw purchase is when someone buys a firearm on behalf of someone else who is not legally allowed to purchase or own a firearm. The new law makes straw purchasing a felony-level offense in Minnesota.

**Bills that did not pass:** Despite the DFL trifecta, bans on semi-automatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazines were not passed by the legislature in 2023 or 2024. Bills on safe storage and lost/stolen firearm reporting, while passed by the House in 2024, failed in the Senate.

## Other

**Controlling lethality of the rounds instead of a weapons ban:** Some have argued that controlling the lethality of the rounds instead of a weapons ban would be more politically adoptable and effective. However, AR-15-style rifles are designed for center-fire cartridges. The Remington .223 has virtually the same power as the 5.56 NATO round. To fire the much less powerful rim-fired, .22LR round would take a conversion kit. However, the AR-15 relies on high-pressure gas from a standard cartridge to operate its bolt carrier group, and reducing this pressure to “less lethal” levels typically prevents the firearm from automatically loading the next round. This would mean a shooter would have to re-cock the rifle after firing each round.

**Need to be a part of an armed insurrection:** As mentioned above, some gun-rights voters harbor a deep fear and resentment against government, both federal and local. They believe they need their legally obtained assault weapons to defend themselves, their families, and their property in the event a tyrannical government attempts to confiscate them, or attack their civil and property rights. A Rand study clearly concluded that an armed insurrection could not win when faced with the full force of the modern U.S. military.<sup>65</sup> These are the main reasons:

- **Military superiority:** The U.S. military has a vast arsenal of advanced weaponry, including tanks, attack helicopters, drones, a modern navy and air force, advanced intelligence and surveillance systems, and robust communication networks. Civilian firearms, including assault weapons, are no match for this level of force.
- **Logistical disadvantages:** An insurrection force would lack a dedicated military manufacturing base, sustainable supply lines for ammunition and other necessities, and formal organizational leadership, all of which are critical for any sustained conflict.

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<sup>65</sup> “Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies,” Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill, Molly Dunigan, *Rand Research*, 9/26/ 2013, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR291z2.html#:~:text=In%2Ddepth%20case%20studies%20of,Victory:%20Lessons%20from%20Modern%20Insurgencies](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR291z2.html#:~:text=In%2Ddepth%20case%20studies%20of,Victory:%20Lessons%20from%20Modern%20Insurgencies).

- **Organizational and command structure:** The military is a highly trained and organized force sworn to follow legal orders. A civilian insurrection would face significant challenges in coordination and command compared to a professional military organization.
- **Historical context:** Historically, successful revolutions or large-scale insurrections have almost always involved significant defection of professional soldiers and officers, or substantial foreign assistance. A purely civilian force, regardless of their weaponry, would lack the necessary experience and structure for success.

## Resources

- Websites with multiple resources:
  - Moms Demand Action/Students Demand Action
  - Every Town for Gun Safety
  - Brady United
  - Giffords, Emma Brown
  - March for Our Lives
  - Protect Minnesota
  - Coalition to Stop Gun Violence
  - Violence Policy Center
- Two *Washington Post* articles provide graphic explanations of the grizzly effects of high-powered, assault-weapon rounds:
  - [https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/interactive/2023/ar-15-force-mass-shootings/?itid=lk\\_inline\\_manual\\_2&itid=lk\\_inline\\_manual\\_2](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/interactive/2023/ar-15-force-mass-shootings/?itid=lk_inline_manual_2&itid=lk_inline_manual_2)
  - [https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/interactive/2023/ar-15-damage-to-human-body/?itid=lk\\_inline\\_enhanced-template](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/interactive/2023/ar-15-damage-to-human-body/?itid=lk_inline_enhanced-template)
- Violence Prevention Working Group, [https://assets.senate.mn/working\\_group/2025-2026/1605\\_Senate\\_Gun\\_Violence\\_Prevention\\_Working\\_Group/VPPRC-Research-Summary.pdf](https://assets.senate.mn/working_group/2025-2026/1605_Senate_Gun_Violence_Prevention_Working_Group/VPPRC-Research-Summary.pdf)
- Dr. Heather Cox Richardson's excellent history of gun violence:  
[https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/p/april-19-2021?token=eyJ1c2VyX2lkIjoyNDcxNTcwOSwicG9zdF9pZCI6MzUzNjQ5MDEsIl8iOiJVQUVZeCIsImIhdCI6MTYxODkyNDkyNywiZXhwIjoxNjE4OTI4NTI3LCJpc3MiOiJwdWltMjA1MzMtMiLCJzdWliOiJwb3N0LXJlYWNOaW9uIn0.JqcHC-BUDAucQRWCA3KifwxR-dM5UVkmwdBwRG5VHKE&utm\\_source=substack&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=share](https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/p/april-19-2021?token=eyJ1c2VyX2lkIjoyNDcxNTcwOSwicG9zdF9pZCI6MzUzNjQ5MDEsIl8iOiJVQUVZeCIsImIhdCI6MTYxODkyNDkyNywiZXhwIjoxNjE4OTI4NTI3LCJpc3MiOiJwdWltMjA1MzMtMiLCJzdWliOiJwb3N0LXJlYWNOaW9uIn0.JqcHC-BUDAucQRWCA3KifwxR-dM5UVkmwdBwRG5VHKE&utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email&utm_content=share)
- [Dr. Marc Gorelick, pediatric leader](#)
- [Dr. Tim Kummer, ER physician](#)
- [Michelle Morse-Wendt, educator](#)
- [Tess Rada, parent and advocate](#)



## EXHIBIT D



### Veterans For Peace Chapter 27 612-821-9141

200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 7 Website: vfpchapter27.org  
Minneapolis MN 55407 Email: vfpchapter27@gmail.org

## West St. Paul City Council Resolution in Support of a State Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines:

### A Description of the Approval Process

Michael Orange, Coordinator, Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws,  
[orange\\_michael@msn.com](mailto:orange_michael@msn.com), 952-905-1448, 9/25/2025

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### Purpose and Background

On 9/22/2025, the West St. Paul City Council unanimously adopted a resolution in support of a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines in spite of the mayor’s opposition. The purpose of this report is to describe the adoption process and the lessons learned hoping that it might be useful to others who wish get their cities to adopt a similar resolution.

Since 2018, I have coordinated Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws group members' efforts to advocate at the Legislature for a state ban on assault weapons. We have joined the other common-sense gun control groups for rallies and hearings at the Capitol (e.g., Moms Demand Action, Protect Minnesota, Giffords, etc.). But the several bills that have been proposed every legislative session have never even made it even close to a floor vote. Meanwhile, the other common-sense gun control groups focused on laws with a greater chance of success, and they were successful for a slew of laws during the DFL "trifecta" during the 2023 and 2024 sessions.

Then things changed. On 8/27/2025, a 23-year-old assailant, using his legally acquired assault rifle, fired 116 high-powered, military rounds in just a few minutes into the Annunciation Church killing 2 children and wounding 23 people, including 20 children. In response, the mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul and seven other cities stated support for a ban on assault weapons,<sup>66</sup> and the Minneapolis City Council later approved a resolution in support of a state ban. Gov. Walz has promised to call a special session of the Legislature to address gun violence, and a state ban on assault weapons has now risen to the top of the list of priorities.

This experience in West St. Paul has both process and content aspects. The next section describes the process, and I have included 5 attachments that address the content. Over the years, I have developed an 11-page, completely sourced "Talking Points" report that I use when developing speeches and submissions (available upon request). The attachments necessarily include a lot of redundancies. Attachment 5 provides a brief synopsis of the primary arguments in favor of a ban. The last section describes the "Takeaways," i.e., the lessons learned.

## **The Process**

**How it started in West St. Paul—the draft resolution and the first city council meeting:** The stance of the nine mayors prompted me on 9/3/2025 to ask the mayor of my city, West St. Paul, to join the other mayors in calling for a state ban. I included the city manager and the chief of police on the email. Knowing that the city typically publishes the agenda for the council meeting on the Friday before the Monday meeting, on Thursday 9/4/2025, I requested the matter be added to the agenda for the 9/8/2025 meeting, and began working closely with my council member, Lisa Eng-Sarne, on a draft resolution. Lisa took my information-rich draft and reshaped and shrank it to fit more appropriately into the "culture" of the city council, and I submitted it on 9/5/2025. After the meeting, I emailed all 6 council members thanking them for the opportunity to speak, and I submitted sources for the assertions in the resolution (**Attachment 1**). Later, I heard from 5 of them that they were in favor of a resolution in support of a state ban.

Before the council meeting on 9/8/2025, the city released an amended agenda that included my resolution and one that the mayor submitted. The mayor's resolution made no reference to supporting a state ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. I spoke in support of my resolution (**Attachment 2**), and the matter was discussed in detail, then tabled to the next meeting. I submitted additional information to the city 2 days later (**Attachment 3**)

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<sup>66</sup> Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/twin-cities-mayors-changes-to-gun-laws/>

**The 9/22/25 city council meeting:** The city manager provided a third draft resolution with the publication of the agenda for the 9/22/2025 city council meeting. I submitted suggested changes to the resolution pointing out how it lacked the needed teeth to have any effect (**Attachment 4**).

Although the issue was not a public hearing, the mayor allowed brief public comments. Four citizens spoke including my wife, Cynthia, and me. Council Member Lisa Eng-Sarne spoke eloquently about the need to make the two critical wording changes I described in my submission, and Council Member Robyn Gulley reiterated her strong support. After about 30 minutes of discussion, the amended resolution was adopted unanimously by the six council members (the mayor only votes to break a tie).



You can read a description of the meeting here (<https://weststpaulreader.com/2025/09/23/west-st-paul-city-council-recap-sept-22-2025/>) and view the archived video of it here: <https://townsquare.tv/West-St-Paul-Streaming-VOD?site=15&showid=4236>. The *West St. Paul Reader* described the discussion, including the basis for the mayor's opposition to strengthening the resolution to call for a ban (photo from the *West St. Paul Reader*):

- **Lisa Eng-Sarne:** "There's nothing more local than the response to gun violence. When a tragedy happens, who's there first? It's the fire fighters, it's the police, it's the people who work with the city that we all love and applaud every day. This is a local issue. I'm proud of us for asking a higher level of government for what we need at a local level."
- **Mayor Dave Napier:** "In no way do I want to make kids less safe. On my personal side, I want to scream and say what are we doing? We gotta to do something," Napier said, before urging personal action instead of the resolution. "If we go outside of our lane, into politically charged topics, and weigh in our personal beliefs, what are we saying to the 20,000 residents behind us. We have to represent them."
- **Robyn Gulley:** "Respectfully, I disagree with that sentiment. Passing a resolution with the strongest language possible is the best way for us to show our support to the state and to



our legislators who can actually make a difference on this. ... What we do to protect the most vulnerable people in our society and our community, that is who we are, that is how we show our values. By not doing anything about this, we are also showing our values. I don't want to live in that world, I want to do something."

What is evident in the above photo of the meeting is the contingent of members of Mom's Demand Action providing support from the audience and through strong applause when speakers and council members spoke in support of adding "teeth" into the proposed resolution. The final signed resolution is not currently available at this time, but I've included a "marked up" copy of the resolution that was prepared by the city manager for the meeting (**Attachment 5**). Finally, the Position Paper by Veterans For Peace can serve as a brief summary and resource for other efforts to support a statewide ban (**Attachment 6**).

**Post-meeting activities:** Several people including my wife, Cynthia and I, posted information about the council's decision on various Facebook pages, and there were scores of positive "reactions" and comments. There were only two negative comments to date but they were uninformed, not disparaging nor insulting. Cynthia and I notified the Governor's Office, the editor of the *Minnesota Reformer*, Indivisible Twin Cities, Stand Up Minnesota, US Rep. Angie Craig, and MN Sen. Matt Klein.

Four legislators represent portions of West St. Paul, and all four have previously committed their support for a state ban to our VFP group when we met with them:

Sen. Sandy Pappas

Sen. Matt Klein

Rep. María Isa Pérez-Vega

Rep. Mary Francis Clardy

This means that the six West St. Paul council members can work with their individual legislators to represent their city's adopted resolution during the pending special session on gun violence.

### **Takeaways**

**Background research:** Having the background information to address any and all possible objections to the resolution was crucial. I was able to provide legitimate sources for every assertion in every submission. It lent credibility to our arguments.

**Need for a champion:** The value of having a champion cannot be overemphasized. Council Member Lisa Eng-Sarne was totally committed to getting a resolution approved. Her guidance for me and eloquence speaking to the issue before the city council, buttressed by her well-respected position on the city council, was absolutely essential.

**Respectful collaboration with staff:** City staff are pulled every which way by the complex issues they face serving their city. The many genuine communications Cynthia and I have had with the city manager and especially the chief of police built a mutual base of trust among us. As a result, the consideration and approval process went smoothly and respectfully. At the second meeting, two city

council members complimented the city manager and city attorney for how well the process worked for this controversial issue.

**Community support:** The presence of close to a dozen members of Moms Demand Action, clad in their bright red T-shirts, sent a visual message of support and their strong outbreaks of applause for the speakers and council members who were, no doubt, assuring to help the council members make the right vote.

**The continuum of concern:**

- **On the right:** To simplify positions, the published statements by the Minnesota Gun Owners Caucus (MGOC) would be on the right end of the spectrum. They argue that mass shootings only account for 4% of the gun deaths (which is true), state assault weapons bans are ineffective (some studies conclude that, others conclude the opposite), and they violate the Second Amendment (not true). They oppose every law that would affect the legal gun owners they represent—even banning binary triggers that double the firing rate for semi-automatic weapons, and instead argue for more mental health services, hardened schools, education, etc.
- **On the left:** At the opposite end of the continuum are the grieving parents of the victims of the Annunciation School and Church. Their gut-wrenching testimony before the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group on 9/15/2025 in support of a ban tore at every listener's heart.
- **In the middle:** The target audience for citizens seeking a resolution in support of a state ban are stuck in the middle. They are the city council members and mayors who want to represent their constituents, some of whom they know would side with the MGOC, and as parents and grandparents themselves, want to do the right thing. They need to hear both the arguments that neutralize those from the MGOC as well as those that help them choose protecting children instead of imaginary Second Amendment gun rights. I don't think shaming them is productive, but others disagree.

**It's a win either way:** Regardless of the outcome, there is value in the process if it raises awareness and forces the city to do more to protect its citizens from gun violence. The West St. Paul chief of police attends city council meetings. He clearly heard about the need to do whatever he could improve safety.

**New information:** Over the 2 ½ weeks the matter was before the city council; more information became available:

- **Refuting the argument that AR-15-style rifles are not "weapons of war:"** A friend suggested I examine the argument that banning high-powered ammunition and replacing it with lower-powered rounds is likely a more successful approach. I found that low-powered rounds lack the power to cycle a semi-automatic weapon. But the examination led me to compare the *power* of military and civilian assault rifles. I came to the surprising conclusion that AR-15-style rifles are actually *more powerful* than the military's standard-issue M4, which replaced the M16. Attachment 3 provides more information.
- **Effectiveness of state bans:** While we had long asserted the effectiveness of the federal ban (1994-2004), I added 2 studies that documented the significant effectiveness of state bans.

- **Support from other organizations:** As a part of the hearings by the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group, 10 organizations submitted “proposals” that stated support for a state ban on assault weapons, including 3 medical groups with a total of 14,000 members.

**“Cloak of legitimacy:”** Speaking on behalf of Veterans For Peace empowered me with what my Cynthia calls the “cloak of legitimacy” for veterans.

### **Attachments**

1. PROCLAMATION SUPPORTING A STATEWIDE BAN ON THE FUTURE SALE AND TRANSFER OF MILITARY-STYLE ASSAULT WEAPONS AND HIGH-CAPACITY MAGAZINES (and Sources for the statements in the resolution submitted by Michael Orange to the West St. Paul City Council on 9/5/25 that called for city support for a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines)
2. Presentation to the West St. Paul City Council Regarding a City Resolution that Supports a Statewide Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines
3. Additional information pertinent to a pending resolution in support of a statewide ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, 9/8/2025
4. Suggested changes to the proposed city resolution “Supporting State and Federal Efforts to Reduce Gun Violence and Promote Public Safety,” released 9/19/2025.
5. Adopted Changes to the Draft Resolution, 9/22/2025
6. Photos
7. Support of a Minnesota Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines



**CITY OF WEST ST. PAUL  
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**RESOLUTION NO. 25-055**

**SUPPORTING STATE AND FEDERAL EFFORTS TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE  
AND PROMOTE PUBLIC SAFETY**

**WHEREAS**, the City of West St. Paul is committed to protecting the health, safety, and well-being of all residents; and

**WHEREAS**, gun violence is a recognized public safety issue in communities across the country, and no community is immune from its impacts; and

**WHEREAS**, tragic events such as the recent shooting at Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis on August 27, 2025, demonstrate the harm that firearms can cause when misused; and

**WHEREAS**, state and federal governments have primary authority to regulate firearms, and evidence-based policies such as background checks, safe storage requirements, and bans on large-capacity magazines have been shown to reduce the risk of firearm-related injuries and deaths; and

**WHEREAS**, state and federal policymakers are considering a range of approaches to firearm safety, and local governments can play a constructive role by supporting higher levels of government in evaluating and implementing actions that enhance public safety; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of West St. Paul, consistent with its values of integrity, responsiveness, and connection, believes its role is to support initiatives that enhance safety while strengthening local partnerships, prevention, and education.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Honorable Mayor David J. Napier and the City Council of the City of West St. Paul:

1. Support state and federal efforts to strengthen background checks, require safe firearm storage, and ban the future sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.
2. Reaffirm the City's commitment to local violence prevention through education, partnerships with law enforcement, schools, and community organizations, and community engagement that fosters safety and trust.
3. Encourage residents to engage with state legislators and members of Congress to advocate for evidence-based solutions to gun violence.
4. Direct the City Clerk to send a copy of this resolution to the Governor of Minnesota, Minnesota state legislators, and members of Congress representing West St. Paul.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of West St. Paul this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September, 2025.

  
David J. Napier, Mayor

Attest:  
  
Nicole J. Jander, City Clerk

ATTACHMENT 6



Clockwise from upper left: West St. Paul City Council meeting, and Judy Rangel testifying in favor of the resolution. VFP thank you certificates to: Council Member John Justin; Patty Matthews, Team Leader for South Metro Moms Demand Action; Council Member Robyn Gulley; Council Member Doug Fromm; and Council Member Lisa Eng-Sarne. Photo of C.M. Lisa Eng-Sarne, Cynthia and Michael Orange, C.M. Robyn Gulley after the Council meeting, Michael Orange testifying.



EXHIBIT E

**Speech to the St. Anthony Village City Council  
by Dave Borton and His Grandson, Connor**

Dave Borton and his grandson, Connor, testified before the St. Anthony Village City Council on 10/14/2025. They asked the City Council and Mayor to adopt a resolution in support of a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.



When Dave asked Connor how shooter drills affected him, Connor replied, "I feel afraid. Why would we have to practice them? Why do we have to think about a shooter coming to our school and killing all our friends?"

The City Council will take up the matter at its next meeting on 10/28/2025.

(This is a link to the video of the meeting. Their testimony begins at 32:00:

<https://webstreaming.ctv15.org/viewer.php?streamid=8102>)



Good Evening,

I am Dave Borton, 2550 38th Ave NE of St Anthony Village and this lad is \_\_\_\_\_.  
Connor, how is it that we know one another? \_\_\_\_\_

Connor and I have worked together on gun control for 4 years, visiting legislators, and co-presenting to the St Paul City Council when the City Council mandated safe storage of weapons in homes.

Tonight, I am here both as a grandparent and as a member of Veterans for Peace, chapter 27. As veterans of foreign wars, we know firsthand the destruction of lives which surrounds the use of weapons and armaments. We don't take our work lightly.

Do you know the leading cause of juvenile deaths in the US? Cancer? No. Car accidents? No. It's guns.

Connor and I come before you asking you to join the 9 metro mayors, 2 city councils, 750 faith leaders, and tons of organizations who have already called upon our state legislators to prohibit the sale or transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. They are nothing but weapons of war, nothing more than knockoffs from the guns we carried into the Vietnam theater.

First it was Columbine, then Sandy Hook, and on and on. Now we have Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis etched into our memories. 158 mass shootings where 86% of the fatalities were the result of assault weapons. No civilian needs this weapon of war yet there are 20 million of them in the US.

Our Veterans for Peace chapter includes hunters. They will tell you that no hunter, no hunter needs a rifle capable of shooting 10, 20, 30, 50, 60, and yes 100 bullets without reloading.

Kids are impacted, Connor has to practice drills at school for active shooters. Can you tell us how that makes you feel, Connor?

In these 3.5 minutes that Connor and I had with you this evening, the active shooter at Annunciation discharged 116 rounds of bullets at our children.

We can do better. I invite this council and mayor to join other cities and resolve to our legislators that we ban the sale of assault weapons. Thank you for your time and if any of you have questions or need assistance in understanding the issue, Ms. Elnagdy has Connor and my contact information.



## EXHIBIT F

### Edward Lorenz's testimony to the St. Paul City Council in support of a proposed ordinance to ban assault weapons in public facilities, 11/5/2025

My name is Edward Lorenz and my wife and I live on Lexington Parkway in St. Paul. I am here today representing Veterans for Peace. I want to thank the City Council for Ord 25-65.



First, I bring too this issue my service as a medic during the Vietnam War. My first assignment there was in a psychiatric unit that treated soldiers suffering from what we now call PTSD. After that, I served in a surgical ward where the wounded were stabilized before evacuation. After Vietnam, as a student at the University of Chicago, I focused on what could lead countries and people to embrace war. I then taught for many years in colleges about the origins of violence and the need for peace.



However, I not only have had first-hand experience with war and the opportunity to study and teach about it. In 2012 one of my young cousins was a victim of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut. She, as several other of the 26 student victims, was a special needs kid. We often think of the unique horror that must have engulfed these special kids as they died of their horrible wounds—an experience like those of the adolescent soldiers I had treated in Vietnam.

I certainly understand law-abiding people who collect technically complex 'things,' including modern weapons. But given the dangers of modern firearms, I cannot fathom why any sane person would oppose regulations to protect us from any use of these weapons against their fellow humans. The blood and gore brought to our world by modern weapons of war, especially in the U.S. with our irresponsibly lax fire-arm regulations, requires all responsible persons to support regulations to protect people, especially our small children, from the horrors these weapons bring.

You deserve great credit for the courage of proposing this ordinance.

Thank you.

Edward Lorenz  
535 Lexington Pkwy. S., Apt. 406  
St. Paul, MN 55116

**Gretchen Damon's testimony to the St. Paul City Council in support of a proposed ordinance to ban assault weapons in public facilities, 11/5/2025**

Councilmembers,

Saint Paul Moms Demand Action supports this ordinance.

If state lawmakers cannot move the needle on gun violence prevention, then local leaders need to get the job done. Similar to the smoking ban in our city's past, it will take community clamor to get us to the other side, where not only can we breathe smoke-free air but also inhabit bullet-free spaces.



This ordinance supports responsible gun ownership. Some of us remember riding in the back of our parents' station wagon with no seat belts. Today we don't think twice about strapping a child in a car. We don't long for "the good old days" of no safety restraints. Through new laws, we've protected our children from second hand smoke and car accidents. It is time to protect them from being shot.

True leadership is not just doing what your constituents demand, but advising them on evidence-based improvements. Making sure rapid-fire weapons disappear from our neighborhoods is a better way of doing things. Kids playing basketball at the rec center or doing their homework at the library away from firearms is a brighter future.

Since the Annunciation shooting, over 5,000 people have joined MN Moms Demand Action. Many now realize their local governments cannot regulate firearms because of preemption. We are in a stranglehold between a 40-year-old statute and a group of intractable state lawmakers paralyzed by ideology; a ridiculous place to be when firearms are the leading cause of death for America's children.

Finally, implementing life-saving policies once preemption is lifted is crucial. For opponents who say this is government overreach, we stand with thousands of Minnesotans who have reached their limit waiting for something to be done.

Gretchen Damon, Moms Demand Action, St. Paul



## EXHIBIT G

September 15, 2025

To: Chair Ron Latz, Vice Chair Zaynab Mohamed, and the Minnesota Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group,

I write as the coordinator for local Chapter 27, Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws group in support of the proposal by the “Minnesota Medical Association Pro,” especially their statement urging “law makers to pass a full, state-wide ban of assault rifles and high-capacity magazines.”

We are all still shocked that, in just a few minutes, a shooter, using his legally acquired assault rifle, fired 117 high-powered, military rounds into Annunciation Church killing 2 children and wounding 23 people including 20 children. It has reawakened fear in all of us for our children and grandchildren.

I want to make it clear that those who are opposed to this ban have been fed lies and half-truths since the 1970s. I understand their love of their weapons. For a year, my assault rifle or my .45 were always within my reach. But I was serving in a war zone for that year in Vietnam as a combat Marine.

In contrast, Senators, I come with information, not the falsehoods that our epidemic of gun violence can only be solved by more guns, the deadlier the better. Or the lie that the registration of assault weapons called for in past bills is actually confiscation. Or the lie that the Second Amendment gives people the right to own weapons of war. Or the absurd notion that we should eliminate gun-free zones and have more guns in our schools.<sup>67</sup> Or the oft-repeated statement meant to distract that “it’s not a gun issue; it’s a mental health issue,” or that antidepressants (SSRIs)<sup>68</sup> are at the root of mass shootings.<sup>69</sup>

We know that assault weapons with high-capacity magazines are the weapon of choice for most mass shooters,<sup>70</sup> and that bans can be effective and save lives by denying these weapons of war to potential shooters,<sup>71</sup> whatever their state of mind.

A recent study compared mass shootings in the US over two-decades to those in 35 similarly developed countries. It concluded that shootings in the US averaged 109 times more than in the

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<sup>67</sup> Comments by MN Sen. Glen Gruenhagen.

<sup>68</sup> SSRI stand for Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRI) are a class of medications used to treat mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

<sup>69</sup> According to a recent article in *Psychiatric Times*, “there is little or no evidence showing that perpetrators of mass shootings are more likely than those in the general public to have used, or to have been prescribed, antidepressants prior to the shooting.” Source: “No, Antidepressants Do Not Provoke Mass Shootings,”

James L. Knoll IV, MD, Ronald W. Pies, MD, *Psychiatric Times*, 9/12/25, <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/no-antidepressants-do-not-provoke-mass-shootings#>

<sup>70</sup> Source: Giffords, [https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/hardware-ammunition/assault-weapons/#footnote\\_1\\_5603](https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/hardware-ammunition/assault-weapons/#footnote_1_5603).

<sup>71</sup> When our country had an assault-weapons ban from 1994-2004, the risk of dying in a mass shooting was 70% lower than in the following decade after Congress killed the effort to extend it. Source: “Did the assault weapons ban of 1994 bring down mass shootings? Here’s what the data tells us,” Michael J. Klein, Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, New York University, *The Conversation*, 6/8/22, <https://theconversation.com/did-the-assault-weapons-ban-of-1994-bring-down-mass-shootings-heres-what-the-data-tells-us-184430>

other countries.<sup>72</sup> Our mental health problems aren't 109 times greater than in those 35 countries. Our epidemic of mass shootings is a direct result of our lax gun laws, and especially our unique availability of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

Claiming it's a mental health issue is just a dodge. The Trump Administration and Congressional Republicans cut \$11.4 billion from various mental and behavioral health services that Democrats in Congress were able to approve over Republican opposition during the prior four years<sup>73</sup>. Blaming inadequate mental health services is just bait-and-switch propaganda from the gun lobby and the NRA.

To argue that AR-15-style rifles are not "weapons of war," is ridiculous. When firing either military or civilian ammunition, they are actually *more powerful* than the military's standard M4 assault rifle.<sup>74</sup> What is more important is that this ammunition can tumble upon impact, which makes them horribly deadly. As one emergency room doctor described it, the effects on a victim "looks like a grenade went off in the body."<sup>75</sup>

You've heard from medical professionals about their heroic efforts to save the victims of the horrific shooting at Annunciation Church and School. I also know, first-hand, the carnage these weapons of war cause.

I'm still haunted by the memory of two young Vietnamese boys who were shot by my fellow Marines after they set off a bomb on our fire support base. I witnessed, up close, how the M16 rounds literally shredded and exploded their little bodies.

In closing, let me repeat: It's about the guns, not some not some imaginary Second Amendment right to buy weapons of war. And it's about our citizens—especially our children—and the lives that would be saved by this ban. Guns or kids. The choice is yours.

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<sup>72</sup> Source: "Public Mass Shootings Around the World: Prevalence, Context, and Prevention," Jason R. Silva, 2/20/24, *Rockefeller Institute of Government*, <https://rockinst.org/blog/public-mass-shootings-around-the-world-prevalence-context-and-prevention/>

<sup>73</sup> "NAMI Statement on Final Passage of Bill Cutting Medicaid for Millions of American," National Alliance on Mental Illness, 7/3/2025, [https://www.nami.org/press-releases/nami-deep-concern-over-final-passage-of-bill/#:~:text=NAMI%20Statement%20on%20Final%20Passage,Alliance%20on%20Mental%20Illness%20\(NAMI](https://www.nami.org/press-releases/nami-deep-concern-over-final-passage-of-bill/#:~:text=NAMI%20Statement%20on%20Final%20Passage,Alliance%20on%20Mental%20Illness%20(NAMI)

<sup>74</sup> The only significant difference between military and civilian assault rifles is that military rifles are capable of automatic fire while civilian rifles are restricted to semiautomatic fire (one round per trigger pull). However, the primary value of firing on automatic is for suppressive fire on the battlefield to enable maneuvering. It has no value for legal uses by civilians (i.e., target shooting, hunting, and self-defense). Secondly, AR-15 rifles chambered for 5.56 NATO ammunition are just as powerful (as measured by muzzle velocity) as the M16 (and actually 7% more powerful than the M4). But what is more important is that the 5.56 NATO bullet tumbles upon impact (TUI), which causes significantly greater damage to humans. AR-15 rifles firing Remington .223 rounds are just as powerful as an M16 (and slightly more powerful than the M4), and TUI rounds are legally available.

<sup>75</sup> Source: "What an AR-15 Can Do to the Human Body: When a patient is shot by an AR-15, it 'looks like a grenade went off in there,'" Sarah Zhang, *Wired*, 6/17/16, <https://www.wired.com/2016/06/ar-15-can-human-body/>

## EXHIBIT H

### New information regarding bans on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines

Hello \_\_\_\_\_

I write as a representative of local Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace. In anticipation of the special session beginning next Monday, I request the opportunity to present information that I believe will be new to your committee as it addresses gun violence prevention.

The gun lobby argues that AR-15-style assault rifles are not “weapons of war,” and that bans on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines are not effective. Using data from the U.S. Army’s “Rifle and Carbine Training Circular” and the “United States Marine Corps Field Medical Training Battalion – East, Camp Lejeune, FMST 1219, M16/M4 Carbine Service Rifle Familiarization,” I was surprised to learn that the typical AR-15-style assault rifle available for civilians is MORE powerful than the military’s standard-issue, M4 assault rifle that replaced the M16 (i.e., greater muzzle velocity with identical, 55-grain bullets). This is true when firing the military’s 5.56 NATO round or the .223 Remington civilian round. What is more important is that this ammunition can tumble and fragment upon impact, which makes them horribly deadly.

The second point is that studies have concluded that state bans of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines are effective. According to a study published in *Applied Economics Letters*, “[I]t was found that assault weapons bans in the states that approved them reduced the number of school shooting victims by 54.4%,” (source: “The effects of state and Federal gun control laws on school shootings,” Mark Gius, *Applied Economics Letters*, 4/19/2027, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13504851.2017.1319555>) Similarly, a Johns Hopkins University study stated, “We found very encouraging effects. ... On a per capita basis, we see a 70% lower rate of individuals killed in mass shootings associated with state bans of [high-capacity magazines],” (source: “Policies That Reduce Gun Violence: Restricting Large Capacity Magazines,” Daniel Webster, Johns Hopkins University, 5/24, 2021, [https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2021/policies-that-reduce-gun-violence-restricting-large-capacity-magazines#:~:text=Our%20estimate%20was%20that%20laws,is%20licensing%20for%20firearm%20purchasers%20\).](https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2021/policies-that-reduce-gun-violence-restricting-large-capacity-magazines#:~:text=Our%20estimate%20was%20that%20laws,is%20licensing%20for%20firearm%20purchasers%20).)

Thank you for your service to our state.

Michael Orange

Sent to the following (highlighted in red) on 10/2/25:

Key Committees:

- Senate Judiciary and Public Safety:

- All senators rely on a form:  
[https://www.senate.mn/committees/committee\\_bio.html?cmte\\_id=3128&ls=94](https://www.senate.mn/committees/committee_bio.html?cmte_id=3128&ls=94)
- Email form example: sen.ron.latz@mnsenate.gov
- **DFL Members:** Chair, Latz; Vice Chair, Verbeten; Clark, Carlson, Pappas, Seeberger, Westlin
- **Committee Administrator:** Nicole Kaplan (651) 296-1224
- **Regular Meeting Schedule:** Room G-15 Capitol, Monday and Wednesday 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **House Public Safety Finance and Policy:** Email form example:  
rep.kelly.moller@house.mn.gov
  - **DFL Members:** Co-Chair, Moller; Co-Vice Chair, Feist; Finn, Curran, Frazier, Hollins, Huot, Pinto, Tabke
  - **Committee Administrator:** Ellen McDaniel 296-1478
  - **Meets:** Tuesday and Thursday, 10:30 a.m. in Room 200

## EXHIBIT I

### Analysis of the Proposed Bill by Minnesota Senator Zaynab Mohamed for a State Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

Michael Orange, Coordinator, Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws<sup>76</sup>  
[orange\\_michael@msn.com](mailto:orange_michael@msn.com), 952-905-1448, 10/28/2025, updated 1/21/2026

**Approximate read time (excluding Summary, footnotes, and attachments):** 12 minutes

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## Summary

### Discussion:

- Sen. Zaynab Mohamed submitted a proposed bill for a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines (*Mohamed bill*, Attachment 1).
- The first purpose of this report is to review the Mohamed bill through the “lens” of those who oppose such a ban:
  - The report assumes that most law-abiding owners of legally acquired assault weapons are deeply concerned about reducing gun violence and especially its effects on our children.
  - However, rather than “blame” the weapons, they insist that other factors like mental health and unsafe schools are actually at the root of mass shootings at schools.
  - Believing incorrectly that the Second Amendment protects their weapons, many feel unjustly blamed for gun crimes committed by others.
  - The bill includes penalties potentially so severe for something they feel is constitutionally protected can invoke rage.

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<sup>76</sup> Michael Orange serves as the coordinator for the local Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace, Sane Gun Laws group. Since 2018 (with the exception of 2020 due to COVID), members have advocated at the Legislature for bills that would establish a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

- If approved, the bill would have the following impacts as of 1/1/2027 on an owner of a legally acquired assault weapon:
  - They could choose to register it, and continue to store and fire it consistent with the law.
  - They could choose to surrender it to the appropriate law enforcement agency, modify the device to make it inoperable, or remove it from the state.
  - They would not be able to transfer it. *Transfer* means a sale, gift, loan, assignment, or other delivery to another. This includes inheritance.
  - A person who inherits a banned weapon must surrender it to the appropriate law enforcement agency, modify the device to make it inoperable, or remove it from the state.

**Recommendations:** The second purpose of this report is to suggest changes that minimize the impacts of a ban on current law-abiding owners, yet still retain the main purpose of the ban, which is to maximize the difficulty of obtaining these weapons by potential mass shooters:

1. Split out the ban on high-capacity magazines so it might have a chance at adoption even if the ban on assault weapons doesn't.
2. Don't grandfather high-capacity magazines.
3. Add a buyback program just for high-capacity magazines. Attachment 2 includes a bill for a buyback program for both assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.
4. Amend the regulations governing firing ranges and sport shooting events to accommodate weapons banned by the bill.
5. Rely on current safe-storage regulations instead of the more rigid ones in the bill.
6. Expand transfer exceptions to reduce the impact on law-abiding owners.

## Introduction and Purpose

**Introduction and purpose:** As a part of the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group hearings in September, 2025, Sen. Zaynab Mohamed submitted a proposed bill for a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines (dated 9/11/2025). Since the Minnesota Revisor has yet to assign the bill a number, I will refer to it as the *Mohamed bill* (Attachment 1).<sup>77</sup>

The tragic mass shooting at Annunciation Catholic School and Church last August<sup>78</sup> has made banning these weapons of war a priority for many Minnesotans. However, no prior bill has even made it to a floor vote. The purpose of this report is to review the Mohamed bill through the “lens” of the opposition. I began my review by researching the stances and fears of law-abiding owners of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines in the hope that the Mohamed bill

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<sup>77</sup> [https://assets.senate.mn/working\\_group/2025-2026/1605\\_Senate\\_Gun\\_Violence\\_Prevention\\_Working\\_Group/Mohamed\\_AR-Ban-bill-language-draft.pdf](https://assets.senate.mn/working_group/2025-2026/1605_Senate_Gun_Violence_Prevention_Working_Group/Mohamed_AR-Ban-bill-language-draft.pdf)

<sup>78</sup> On August 27, 2025, a shooter fired 116 rounds from an AR-15 assault rifle into the Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis. He killed two children—Fletcher Merkel (8 years old) and Harper Moyski (10 years old)—and injured 23 people including 20 other children.



might be amended in a way to address these concerns and fears while still retaining the bill's primary objective: making it more difficult for potential mass shooters to obtain these deadly weapons. Hopefully, implementing the suggestions will enhance its chances for adoption.

We know that most mass shooters obtain their weapons (including assault weapons), 1) legally through licensed dealers, 2) by stealing or obtaining them from family members, and 3) through failures in the background check system.<sup>79</sup> An assault weapon ban would completely stop the first method for dealers in Minnesota. Other common-sense, gun control bills that are already approved and pending before the Legislature address the other two methods. No legislation will ever stop illegal gun sales. That's up to law enforcement and the courts.

**Law-abiding gun owner beliefs:** I believe most law-abiding gun owners are deeply concerned about reducing gun violence and how this violence traumatizes and affects our children. Yet, rather than “blame” the weapons, they insist that other factors like mental health and unsafe schools are actually at the root of mass shootings at schools. They argue that addressing those factors is the right approach; not bans. Many gun owners believe that the U.S. Supreme Court has determined that the Second Amendment protects assault weapons, and they maintain that they have an absolute right to own them even though the fact that ten states have had bans that have survived court challenges for decades proves this is false.<sup>80</sup> Many feel attacked for defending their perceived, constitutionally protected right to own, use, and protect themselves and their families with these weapons. And they feel unjustly blamed for gun crimes committed by others.

The Mohamed bill makes it unlawful for a person to “manufacture, import, transfer, own, or possess large-capacity magazines, .50 caliber or larger firearms, or semiautomatic military-style assault weapons.” It lists logical exceptions for police departments and the military, and also exempts current owners of lawfully-acquired assault weapons provided they register and store them according to the law. The bill states that a person who violates the law “is guilty of a felony

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<sup>79</sup> “Notably, most individuals who engaged in mass shootings used handguns (77.2%), and 25.1% used assault rifles in the commission of their crimes. Of the known mass shooting cases (32.5% of cases could not be confirmed), 77% of those who engaged in mass shootings purchased at least some of their guns legally, while illegal purchases were made by 13% of those committing mass shootings. In cases involving K-12 school shootings, over 80% of individuals who engaged in shootings stole guns from family members. The findings support safe storage of guns. Yet, the researchers noted that there are no federal laws requiring safe storage of guns, and no federal standards for firearm locks. The data also support ‘red flag’ laws permitting law enforcement or family members to petition a state court to order temporary removal of a firearm from a person who presents a danger.” (Source: “Public Mass Shootings: Database Amasses Details of a Half Century of U.S. Mass Shootings with Firearms, Generating Psychosocial Histories,” National Institute of Justice, 2/3/22, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/public-mass-shootings-database-amasses-details-half-century-us-mass-shootings#:~:text=Notably%2C%20most%20individuals%20who%20engaged,stole%20guns%20from%20family%20members>)

<sup>80</sup> On June 26, 2008, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed by a vote of 5 to 4 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in *Heller v. District of Columbia* and established that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess firearms for self-defense in the home. The Court also specified that this protection extends to “arms” in common use for lawful purposes, such as self-defense, and that handguns are “arms” for the purposes of the Second Amendment. The decision does not protect weapons that are not “in common use” for lawful purposes, such as modern military weapons (source: <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/554/570/>).

and may be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than five years or to payment of a fine of not more than \$25,000 or both.” The threat of penalties potentially so severe for something they feel is constitutionally protected can invoke rage among law-abiding owners.

## Current Law, Definitions, and Terminology

**Current restrictions on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines:** The bill cites current restrictions on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines:

- Since 8/1/2023, it is illegal to purchase, possess, or transfer military-style assault weapons without a background check.
- The following are a selection of the general categories that describe people who are currently ineligible to possess military-style assault weapons (refer to Article 2, Sec.2, Subd. 1 of the bill in Attachment 1 for the complete list of ineligible people):
  - Younger than 18
  - Convicted of a crime of violence
  - Mentally ill, developmentally disabled, or chemically dependent
  - An “illegal alien”
  - A veteran with a dishonorable discharge
  - A person subject to an “extreme risk” protection order

There are also very specific restrictions in current law regarding the sale, transfer, registration, background checks, record keeping, where the weapons can be carried and stored, and penalties for violating the law.<sup>81</sup>

**Definition of “semiautomatic military-style assault weapon:”** Article 1, Section 1, Subd. 7 (a) (1) lists 17 specific “semiautomatic rifle” types that are included in the ban. Subsequent sections include variations, modifications, and alternative manufacturers of these rifles in the ban. Article 1, Section 1, Subd. 7 (b) includes the following weapons:<sup>82</sup>

- Rifles, pistols, and shot guns with a detachable magazine and any of the following characteristics: A pistol grip, thumbhole stock, or a protruding grip; a barrel shroud; or a folding, telescoping, or thumbhole stock.
- A semiautomatic pistol with a non-detachable magazine that has a capacity greater than ten rounds.

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<sup>81</sup> Minnesota does not have a central registry of firearms, so there is no state form that records the serial number of an assault weapon for a state registry. Permits to purchase a “semiautomatic military-style assault weapon” are required in Minnesota because of the state's universal background check law, which went into effect on 8/1/2023. This law requires a “Permit to Purchase” to buy these firearms, in addition to other types of firearms like pistols. Before this date, a permit was not required. Currently, the serial number is recorded during the transfer process whether the sale is from a federally licensed firearms dealer (FFL) or between private parties. The FFL dealer and both parties of a private purchase will record the permit number and the firearm’s serial number for their internal records, and keep it for at least ten years.

<sup>82</sup> This is a general description. Refer to the actual language in the bill in Attachment 1 for details.

- A conversion kit, part, or combination of parts, from which an assault weapon can be assembled if those parts are in the possession or under the control of the same person.
- Large-capacity magazines, which means “any ammunition feeding device with the capacity to accept more than ten rounds, or any conversion kit, part, or combination of parts from which this type of device can be assembled if those parts are in the possession or under the control of the same person.”
- A .50 caliber or larger firearm means a firearm “that is capable of expelling a metal projectile that measures one-half inch or larger in diameter but does not include an antique or replica firearm that uses black powder.”

**Terminology and loss of “law-abiding” status:** I use the term *law-abiding* to imply compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Current law-abiding owners can obtain an exception to the ban and have their legally obtained assault weapons *grandfathered* via compliance with the proposed regulations that require registration, safe storage, etc. However, if an owner of a grandfathered/registered weapon is convicted of a crime of violence, for example, they would lose their right to an exception from the ban, and be compelled to comply with the provisions in Article 1, Sec. 4, Subd. 5 (g):

- Surrender all banned weapon to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Modify them to be permanently inoperable, or, in the case of magazines, restrict them to accommodate 10 rounds or less.
- Remove them from the state.

For the sake of brevity, unless stated otherwise, I use the following words and terms: My use of the word *ban* refers to a state ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. The Mohamed bill has a long list of “semiautomatic military-style assault weapons” that are included in the ban, including rifles, pistols, and shotguns. I use the term *AR-15-style rifles* to represent the weapons included in the ban, and the term *assault weapons* (or just *weapons*) to include high-capacity magazines (i.e., magazines with a capacity of more than ten rounds).

## Common Arguments by Opponents of a Ban

**Many gun owners believe that assault weapons bans demonize AR-15-style rifles and penalize those who own them:** There is a vibrant subculture of enthusiasts who enjoy modifying and upgrading their AR-15 rifles and sharing their experiences with others, much like those who modify cars or computers. They share a passion for the rifle platform’s ability to be customized, its technology, and its functionality. They can be offended by the suggestion that there is something inherently immoral about these weapons and their attachment to them.

The rifle’s design is built around a two-part system—the upper and lower receivers. The lower receiver, which contains the trigger and magazine well, is the serialized component considered to be the actual firearm. The upper receiver contains the barrel, bolt carrier group, and other

components of the rifle. With the right tools and experience, a person can swap out for a barrel of a different length, caliber, or configuration. A variety of stocks and accessories are available (e.g., sights, scopes, grips, lasers, flashlights, suppressors, etc.). This flexibility, plus their high accuracy with minimal recoil, make AR-15-style rifles extremely popular for legal uses like sport shooting, small game hunting,<sup>83</sup> and defense. Unfortunately, the ability of assault rifles to accommodate high-capacity magazines (up to 100 rounds each) makes them the weapon of choice for mass shooters.

After 1/1/2027, a law-abiding owner will have registered their assault weapons and are storing them appropriately, so there should be no implied shame in obeying the law if it is approved. Given the flexibility of the AR-15 rifle platform, the Mohamed bill will not affect owners' ability to modify the upper receiver of their grandfathered/registered rifles (i.e., lower receivers) to fit their changing needs.

**Some law-abiding owners believe that bans penalize them by requiring registration, which, they believe, is a slippery slope to confiscation:** At meetings with legislators, we learned that some gun-rights voters harbor a deep fear and resentment against government, both federal and local. They believe they need their legally obtained, assault weapons to defend themselves, their families, and their property in the event the government attempts to confiscate them, or attack their civil and property rights. They see registration as a step towards confiscation.

As regards the fear that an armed insurrection against the government would be necessary, I used Google AI to research this issue, and confirmed that the summary quoted below accurately summarizes the reliable news sources on which it was based:

Ultimately, an armed insurrection could result in significant destruction and loss of life but would not achieve the goal of overthrowing the U.S. government when faced with the full force of the modern U.S. military. These are the main reasons:

**Military Superiority:** The U.S. military has a vast arsenal of advanced weaponry, including tanks, attack helicopters, drones, advanced intelligence and surveillance systems, and robust communication networks. Civilian firearms, including AR-15s, are no match for this level of force.

**Logistical Disadvantages:** An insurrection force would lack a dedicated military manufacturing base, sustainable supply lines for ammunition and other necessities, and formal organizational leadership, all of which are critical for any sustained conflict.

**Organizational and Command Structure:** The military is a highly trained and organized force sworn to follow legal orders. A civilian insurrection would face

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<sup>83</sup> Compared to the rounds typically used for hunting larger game (e.g., the 30.06 round), the 5.56 NATO round and its civilian companion round, the .223 Remington, are not as effective for deer, feral pigs, elk, bear, etc. They lack the 30.06 round's mass and energy, and they are designed to tumble upon impact and fragment. This makes them unsuitable for a "humane" kill at longer distances where preserving the meat is an important purpose of the hunt, but acceptable for destroying small game and varmints.

significant challenges in coordination and command compared to a professional military organization.

**Historical Context:** Historically, successful revolutions or large-scale insurrections have almost always involved significant defection of professional soldiers and officers, or substantial foreign assistance. A purely civilian force, regardless of their weaponry, would lack the necessary experience and structure for success.

**Nature of the Weaponry:** While AR-15s and high-capacity magazines are lethal in civilian contexts like mass shootings, they are still semi-automatic weapons that are largely outmatched by the [weapons] used by the military and would be ineffective against armored vehicles and air power.

I don't see registration as a reasonable concern. Since 8/1/2024, the state has required buyers to obtain a Permit to Purchase that includes a background check, and the serial number is recorded by the buyer and seller during the transfer process. I would argue the state requires registration of vehicles, boats, campers, and even canoes.<sup>84</sup> It's a reasonable requirement that enables the current legal owner to retain their *grandfathered* weapons, and continue to fire them at gun ranges and wherever it's is legally allowed.<sup>85</sup>

**Many gun owners believe that AR-15-style rifles are not "weapons of war:"** In order to argue that the Second Amendment protects assault weapons, opponents of banning them must show that they are substantively different than "modern military weapons," i.e., they are not "weapons of war." The history of the AR-15 contradicts that belief. The original ArmaLite AR-15, designed by Eugene Stoner and his team 75 years ago in 1956, was a selective-fire, automatic rifle intended for military use. Later, the Colt Firearms Co. marketed it to the military as the M16 rifle. In 1964, Colt redesigned the AR-15 for civilian use as a semi-automatic version of the M16 (one round per trigger pull). The only significant difference between military and civilian assault rifles is that military rifles are capable of automatic fire, while civilian rifles are restricted to semiautomatic fire. However, the primary value of firing on automatic is for suppressive fire on the battlefield to enable maneuvering. It has no value for legal uses by civilians (i.e., sport shooting, hunting, and self-defense). When firing either military or civilian ammunition, AR-15-style rifles are actually more powerful than the military's standard M4 assault rifle that replaced the M16.<sup>86</sup> What is more important is that this ammunition can

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<sup>84</sup> Minnesota requires vehicle registration (cars, boats, trailers) primarily for public safety, revenue generation (highway funds), and vehicle tracking/ownership verification, ensuring all vehicles on public roads pay taxes, have proper identification (plates/tabs), and are accounted for by the state for law enforcement and licensing purposes. This process funds road maintenance and establishes legal ownership, making it crucial for operating on public streets and waterways.

<sup>85</sup> In states with assault weapon bans, registering grandfathered weapons (those owned before the ban) serves to track these specific firearms, ensuring they remain in legal possession, preventing them from entering the illegal market, allowing law enforcement to trace crime guns, and often requiring secure storage or background checks for future transfers, ultimately limiting their circulation and future availability without confiscating them from current owners.

<sup>86</sup> The muzzle velocity of an AR-15 is not significantly different than for an M16 for both 5.56 NATO rounds and .223 Remington; and it has a greater muzzle velocity than the M4—7% greater firing 5.56 NATO rounds and 4% greater firing .223 Remington rounds.

tumble upon impact when it hits a human body and then fragment, which makes it horribly deadly.

**Many gun owners believe that bans are ineffective, that other approaches are more effective, and that guns make us safer:** Opponents to bans argue they are ineffective, and that it's better to focus on improving mental health resources. In fact, studies refute this argument. As the ten states with assault weapons bans have experienced, the frequency and severity of gun violence is dramatically reduced when it becomes illegal to buy or transfer such a weapon. Bans are effective, especially if they are part of a comprehensive set of common-sense gun control regulations (e.g., red flag; safe storage; and closed loopholes for background checks, gun show sales, and ghost guns).<sup>87</sup> A 2024 study published by the Rockefeller Institute of Government concluded that the US suffered 109 public mass shootings between 2000 and 2022, compared to a total of 35 in 35 other similarly developed countries.<sup>88</sup> Our health problems aren't 109 times greater than these 35 other similarly developed countries. Our epidemic of mass shootings is a direct result of our lax gun laws, and especially our unique availability of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Given that there are more guns in circulation than people in America, if more guns led to fewer violent crimes, America would be the safest place in the world.

Instead of "either/or," a "both/and" approach is best. We should advocate for the assault weapons ban, but also recognize that investments in increased mental health resources, improved school safety (e.g., entrances secured by fob controls), and increased penalties for general gun assaults (not just assault weapons) are needed too.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> States with restrictions on magazine size experience mass shootings at less than half the rate of states without restrictions (Source: Louis Klarevas, Andrew Conner, and David Hemenway, "The Effect of Large-Capacity Magazine Bans on High-Fatality Mass Shootings, 1990–2017," *American Journal of Public Health* 109, no. 12 (2019): 1754–61, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305311>). There are numerous studies that confirm that the federal assault weapons ban (1994–2004) was effective. Studies concluded that the risk of dying in a mass shooting was 70% lower than in the following decade after Congress killed the effort to extend it (Source: "Did the assault weapons ban of 1994 bring down mass shootings? Here's what the data tells us," Michael J. Klein, Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, New York University, *The Conversation*, 6/8/22, <https://theconversation.com/did-the-assault-weapons-ban-of-1994-bring-down-mass-shootings-heres-what-the-data-tells-us-184430>). According to a study published in *Applied Economics Letters*, "[I]t was found that assault weapons bans in the states that approved them reduced the number of school shooting victims by 54.4%" (Source: "The effects of state and Federal gun control laws on school shootings," Mark Gius, *Applied Economics Letters*, 4/19/2017, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13504851.2017.1319555>). Similarly, a Johns Hopkins University study stated, "We found very encouraging effects. ... On a per capita basis, we see a 70% lower rate of individuals killed in mass shootings associated with state bans of [high-capacity magazines] (source: "Policies That Reduce Gun Violence: Restricting Large Capacity Magazines," Daniel Webster, Johns Hopkins University, 5/24, 2021, <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2021/policies-that-reduce-gun-violence-restricting-large-capacity-magazines#:~:text=Our%20estimate%20was%20that%20laws,is%20licensing%20for%20firearm%20purchasers%20>0).

<sup>88</sup> Source: "Public Mass Shootings Around the World: Prevalence, Context, and Prevention," Jason R. Silva, 2/20/24, *Rockefeller Institute of Government*, <https://rockinst.org/blog/public-mass-shootings-around-the-world-prevalence-context-and-prevention/>

<sup>89</sup> Governor Walz's September proposal for a special session listed 9 policies and appropriations that he wanted approved during the session. All three of the above-listed measures were included in the Governor's proposal: 10. Assault weapons and high-capacity magazine ban.



One of the legislators we met with suggested “packaging” the assault-weapons ban bill with those other measures to make it more palatable to those opposed to a ban. However, it is possible to combine a funding component with related regulation in a single bill in the Minnesota Legislature, particularly in the form of “omnibus bills;” however, the practice is constrained by the state’s “single subject” clause in the state Constitution. Article 4, Section 17 states that, “No law shall embrace more than one subject, which shall be expressed in its title.” The primary goal of this rule is to prevent “logrolling” (combining unrelated provisions to force a majority vote), and ensure transparency. It would seem that increased penalties for “general gun assaults” could be added to the Mohamed’s bill, but the funding required for “increased mental health resources and improved school safety” may be prohibited by the Constitution.

**Many gun owners believe that bans prevent law-abiding people from firing these weapons:**

This is not true. Minnesota allows certain gun ranges to rent, for on-site-use only, a wide range of even fully-automatic, military weapons to people as young as 16 because certain federally licensed dealers are exempt from the state’s general prohibition on these weapons.<sup>90</sup> The Mohamed bill could change the Minnesota regulations for these gun ranges to include on-site rental and use of the weapons included in the assault weapon ban so those who don’t own a “grandfathered” weapon and are prohibited from buying one after the ban goes into effect could fire them at these ranges. Thus, the ban would have no effect on legal owners’ rights to fire their weapons, and others could fire them at an appropriately licensed gun range. That would include sport shooting events that allow competitors to fire AR-15-style rifles.

**Many gun owners believe that bans would prevent parents from teaching their children to use these weapons responsibly:** The Mohamed bill would make it illegal after 1/1/2027 for a father, for example, to teach his daughter to use these weapons responsibly by letting her fire his rifle on their farm or on a range because this would be a form of “transfer.” The bill could include an exception for this kind of situation, i.e., a temporary “transfer” for the purposes of instruction or skill development provided the legal owner of the registered weapon is always on site, the shooter is related by blood or marriage, and the firing takes place where it is legally allowed.

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11. Binary trigger ban.
  12. Eliminate the ghost gun loophole.
  13. Strengthen Extreme Risk Protection Orders, including increased funding for public outreach and education.
  14. Expand school safety funding.
  15. Increase funding for mental health treatment.
  16. Strengthen prohibitions against domestic abusers to ensure they do not have access to firearms (HF 391).
  17. Increase criminal penalties for violent offenses committed with a firearm and increased penalties for impersonating a police officer.
  18. Increased funding for the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension’s Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Team.

<sup>90</sup> This is made possible by a specific exception in Minnesota Statutes § 609.67. All federally regulated weapons, including machine guns, are also subject to federal law and oversight by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. For example, at Bill’s Gun Shop and Range, shooters 16 & 17 years old must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. This federally licensed range offers over 40 different, fully-automatic machine guns. Source: <https://billsgs.com/rentals/#:~:text=Available%20Firearms-,Range%20Rentals,not%20included%20in%20this%20price.>

**Bans would prevent parents from bequeathing their legally obtained weapons:** There is a long-honored tradition of passing down firearms from parents to their children. Perhaps the ban on transfers could include a one-time exception for people related by blood, marriage, or perhaps a guardian provided the recipients pass a background check and continue to be “law-abiding.” Some states that ban the sale of assault weapons allow for the **transfer and inheritance of existing, legally possessed firearms** under specific conditions.<sup>91</sup> Some may object to this suggestion since it would keep more banned weapons in the state for another generation.

## Suggested Changes to the Mohamed Bill

The goal here is to minimize the impacts on law-abiding Minnesota weapon owners while maximizing the potential to reduce the accessibility of banned weapons from mass shooters.

1. **Split the bill in two:** Sen. John Marty wrote well-crafted bills in 2022 (SF 3377 and SF 3378) that covered virtually every common-sense gun restriction. It went nowhere. The DFL trifecta during the 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions enabled the passage of numerous individual bills that enacted various components of Sen. Marty’s comprehensive bill. If the ban on high-capacity magazines was separated as an independent bill, it might have a chance at adoption even if the ban on assault weapons doesn’t.<sup>92</sup>
2. **Don’t grandfather high-capacity magazines:** High-capacity magazines (capacity larger than ten rounds) have no value for legal uses (sport shooting, hunting, defense). I would not allow them to be grandfathered.
3. **Buyback program:** Two bills introduced in the 2025 session, HF 2449 and SF 1596, include buyback programs for both assault weapons and high-capacity magazines (Attachment 2). If there was a separate bill that bans high-capacity magazines, inclusion of a buyback program for just them would be a relatively inexpensive enhancement.<sup>93</sup>
4. **Expanding legal weapons that can be rented at firing ranges and sport shooting events:** The bill could change the Minnesota regulations for licensed gun ranges to include on-site rental and use of the weapons included in an assault weapon ban so that those who don’t own a grandfathered weapon and are prohibited from buying one after the ban goes into

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<sup>91</sup> The Washington State assault weapons ban (effective 2023) allows a person to inherit an assault weapon and keep it within the state. However, they cannot sell or transfer it to any other person in the state except to a licensed dealer, a gunsmith for repair, or law enforcement. The Connecticut ban allows registered assault weapons (those lawfully owned and registered before the 2013 ban) to be transferred through bequest or intestate succession (inheritance without a will). The individual who inherits the weapon must, within 90 days, apply for a new certificate of possession, render the firearm inoperable, sell it to a licensed dealer, or remove it from the state. The Delaware ban grandfathers assault weapons acquired before the ban (June 30, 2022) and allows them to be transferred to a family member.

<sup>92</sup> Five states ban the sale of high-capacity magazines but do not have a statewide ban on assault weapons: Colorado, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

<sup>93</sup> A typical 30-round magazine costs about \$16. While there may be many thousands of high-capacity magazines in the state already, a buyback program would not have to offer full pre-used value for these magazines.

effect could fire them there. That would include sport shooting events that allow competitors to fire AR-15-style rifles.

**5. Adding weapons screening at firing ranges and sport shooting events:**

- Currently, operators of firing ranges and sport shooting events rely on a participant's signed waiver that they are not legally prohibited from possessing or using any of the firearms that they will bring or rent, and that they are not impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, or certain medications. In the event the range operator discovers a participant lied on the waiver, for example, by bringing an illegal weapon onto the range, the operator is not authorized to seize or confiscate a person's private property. Only law enforcement officers have that authority. The operator must provide the person's identity (obtained from their photo ID and waiver) and details of the incident to the local law enforcement, which will determine if the weapon is indeed illegal and take the appropriate action. A range operator who knowingly allows the use of an illegal weapon could face potential legal repercussions or even risk the temporary or permanent closure of the range if the activity is deemed a clear and immediate safety hazard or a violation of state law.
- The Mohamed bill could amend Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 87A to require the operators of firing ranges and sport shooting events to confirm that a participant who seeks to fire a weapon that is banned by the Mohamed bill has complied with the bill's registration requirements for that weapon.
- In the event the operator discovers the participant has not registered the weapon, the operator is then bound by current law to notify the local authorities. This becomes another method of reducing the number of these banned weapons in the state.<sup>94</sup>

**6. Rely on current safe-storage regulations:** Article 1, Subd. 5 (b) (2) of the Mohamed bill requires current legal owners of assault weapons to "allow the appropriate law enforcement agency to inspect the storage of the device to ensure compliance with this subdivision." Minnesota's firearm safe storage law does not allow police to conduct warrantless, on-site inspections of private homes to check for compliance. This provision in the bill will likely trigger privacy and search and seizure concerns. The bill could rely on current safe storage regulations instead.

**7. Expand transfer exceptions:** To reduce the impact on law-abiding people, the Mohamed bill could add the following exceptions to the ban on transfers:

- It could allow the one-time but permanent transfer of a grandfathered/registered weapon to a person who is related by blood, marriage, or perhaps a guardian provided the recipient passes a background check. Some may object to this suggestion since it would keep more banned weapons in the state for another generation.
- The bill could also create a "temporary transfer" to allow the owner of a grandfathered/registered weapon to loan it to another person for a brief time provided the owner is continually on site with the shooter, and the shooter has passed a background check. The owner must take possession of the weapon after the shooting

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<sup>94</sup> The primary method of reduction is banning their sale. Confiscation could occur if an owner is convicted of a crime that would make them illegal to possess even a registered weapon. A third method is when transfer limits would be triggered, for example, via an inheritance.

session. There would be no limit on the times the owner uses this “temporary transfer” privilege.

### **Attachments**

1. Sen. Zaynab Mohamed’s proposed bill to ban the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, 9/11/2025
2. SF 1596/HF 2449, 2025-26 Legislature
3. Veterans For Peace Support of a Minnesota Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

## EXHIBIT J

### Statewide Gun Violence Prevention Coalition Meeting, 10/23/2025

Report by attendee, Edward Lorenz

There were about 40 attendees for the meeting, which was sponsored by Protect Minnesota. While I didn't fully get all the organization representatives present, there were about 20 percent from health facilities, mostly people who respond directly to trauma – both medical practitioners, social workers and psychological service personnel. Another 20 percent were from religious organizations (including one woman who represented Annunciation school parents). There were several who worked for hospital administration (including at least two who simply called themselves lobbyists). Several others were from social service organizations. There was an attorney who had represented victims. One person was from Duluth - the only person from outside the Twin Cities metro. Then there were staff associated with Protect Minnesota and related gun violence groups.

We spent about an hour introducing ourselves and our perspective on gun violence prevention. This was really interesting and, while I'm not sure I got all perspectives, there seemed to be patterns tied to the type work or organization we were with. The health services group, which was primarily composed of minority individuals tied to work in North Minneapolis or the Lake Street corridor, were passionate about being overwhelmed with problems of violence. While most of the rest of us had the luxury of being more detached from helping victims of violence. Those from religious organization, including of course Annunciation were passionate about how violence and the gun culture that supports it is so in contradiction to the major religious traditions. They also expressed frustration with people from "Christian nationalist churches" who readily embrace guns.

While I tried to avoid speaking too much, in the introduction, I explained I was from Veterans for Peace and gave a summary of us for any who might have no idea of our link to the domestic gun violence issue. We were asked to explain briefly our personal perspective and I focused on three parts of my perspective:

1. I have had contact with victims of mass shootings, both my young distant cousin from Sandy Hook and knowing people from Annunciation, since we are members of an adjacent parish (St. Joan of Arc),
2. My military experience as a medic in Vietnam, and
3. While I appreciated the political realities of the issue, given closely divided state government, I think we need to "pinch" ourselves to get out of complacency any time we explain inaction by mentioning the Republicans and a few Democrats who can't bring themselves to ban weapons that are used to kill little children.

While the agenda given at the beginning listed an assault weapons ban, banning high-capacity magazines, safe storage enforcement, etc. as the topic for the morning, those already engaged in lobbying the Legislature, or more general lobbying, seemed to play the role of explaining how we lack a majority for such steps, even though polling shows such reforms are overwhelmingly

popular. We spent the remaining time, until 2:00 p.m. discussing the difficulty of moving from the wish list printed on our agenda (regulating automatic weapons, high-capacity magazines, etc.) and constant reflections on the reality of rigid political divisions in Minnesota.

We agreed as we left to hold a one-hour meeting in about a month to decide how to move forward, especially should there be movement on a special session or constitutional amendment. Beyond that meeting, we also agreed to quarterly meetings starting early in the next legislative session, then a post-session strategy meeting as election prep. The final session would be one to evaluate what is next after the fall 2026 elections.

While I said a little at the intro about this, I later joined with a person from an ELCA church in Blaine to call for us to admit that, whatever the political reality, we must be explicit in identifying the reasons for failure to regulate weapons of war that are used in mass casualty atrocities – especially in schools. Again, I get the need to count votes in the legislature, but we should never forget the follow-up reality that it is an absurdity to yield to a small minority of adults wanting to play with these weapons while children die. Without trying to play with partisan strategy, why can't we convince partisan politicians to decide, if the electorate overwhelmingly want gun regulation, to display the courage to yield to the wishes of the vast majority?

I respect the wisdom of the political realists on the gun issue. For a third of a century, I taught political science classes that included studying 'interest-group' politics. But we also covered a somewhat successful minority who brought break-throughs on issues with less support than gun-control. I just don't know why we don't test a break through that would change the dynamics of the gun issue.

I left this with three general thoughts:

1. I was impressed with the people who attended – 40+ really good and concerned people, some dedicating a lot of time to a vital and yet divisive issue in our ridiculously polarized political reality.
2. We desperately need a break through that would allow the will of the vast majority to overcome the "money in politics crowd" that blocks sane gun policy;
3. The morning of our meeting, you may recall was when Sophia Forchas, one of the Annunciation School victims, was discharged from rehab. Several of the attendees at our meeting had stood as a welcoming 'honor guard' when Sophia left the clinic earlier in the morning. That background I think speaks to the frustrations with our politic system's failure to address urgent needs – like real gun restrictions and all the other needs to address the embrace of guns that is our national disgrace. Clearly, we need a breakthrough that opens the policy process to change and demonstrates putting lobbyists for special economic and cultural interests in their place.

## **MN Gun Violence Prevention Coalition Meeting: January 28, 2026**

Report by attendee: Ed Lorenz

There were 25 people in attendance (counting myself) from 14 different organizations (counting VFP). While this was a decline of number of people attending from October, it was noted that some people from the earlier meeting were fearful of going to meetings because of the ICE activity in the region.

The organizations represented [in alpha order] were:

1. Children's Minnesota
2. ENGAGE [Lutherans for Gun Violence Prevention]
3. ERA Minnesota
4. Everytown for Gun Safety
5. Giffords
6. Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions
7. The League of Women Voters
8. Metro Youth Diversion Center
9. Moms Demand Action
10. National Council of Jewish Women
11. Protect Minnesota (including two people from the Northland Chapter in Duluth)
12. SAVE
13. Teachers Unify to End Gun Violence, and
14. Veterans for Peace.

There was some overlapping membership and two organizations, the host Protect Minnesota and the League of Women Voters had at least five people attending. The League of Women Voters group announced they had just decided formally as an organization to make gun violence reduction a priority.

I was especially impressed by the focus of several of the participants and their organization. For example, there also was a representative from Teachers Unified to End Gun Violence who was really focused on the gun storage issue. They have a program called Project Locked Down that I found very interesting. There was the representative from Suicide Awareness Voices of Education who I think especially spoke to some concerns that veterans have had. He was new in his position but had longer term related experience in the Twin Cities. In addition, there were two public relations/lobbyists for Every Town – Kathleen Halgren and Pete Vujovic – who impressed me with their understanding of the Minnesota position in the national gun control debate. The leader of the League of Women Voters, Martha Micks seemed to have led the League into taking a strong position on gun control and working in coalition with the other groups. As in October, I also had good interaction with Barbara Fermon of the National Council of Jewish Women who is very interested in working with veterans. Similarly, Ron Letnes from the Lutheran synod in St. Paul is really committed to changing cultural embrace of violence. Finally, Emily Walsh, an attorney with Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, was impressive in understanding Minnesota specifically even though she works nationally.



Our discussion on Thursday began by reviewing what has happened since the October meeting, including the failure to have a special session of the legislature. There was both disappointment with this but realization of the reality that nothing would have been accomplished in the session. There was appreciation of the limited executive orders, especially what had happened earlier in the day related to guns at the capitol. While wishing the deadlock in the legislature would end, that the special elections maintained the number of gun control supporters in the legislature was positive. Even more, so the events of the past year – and now the last few weeks - have, according to polls, made support for our common legislative agenda as positive as ever.

Accordingly, Protect Michigan has settled on a limited set of priorities for the coming session of the legislature: 1. regulating the weapons of war, (banning assault weapon and high-capacity magazines), 2. enhancing safe storage law, and 3. security of the capital [which has been somewhat achieved with the Governor's actions and that of the state Senate – and perhaps of the state House]. In addition, there have been two non-legislative policy changes Protect Minnesota believes may be addressed in the spring: 1. Liberalized Medicaid reimbursement for gun related health cost, and 2. Judicial progress in handling the backlog of domestic violence cases and precedents in handling the 2023-24 'Red Flag' law. In focusing on the three legislative priorities, Protect Michigan admits there are nine other specific issue they believe cannot be successfully addressed this session: stolen firearms, ghost guns, reenactment of lapsed binary trigger ban, creating an office of gun violence, greater Medicaid support for gun violence victims, efforts to reduce domestic violence, addressing bulk firearm purchasing, gun industry accountability, and stronger red flag legislation.

Following explanation and review of the legislative agenda, we had discussions of several structural changes to allow the coalition to function more effectively, such as creating a shared coalition calendar and a directory of the organizations and key personnel in the coalition. There also is interest in developing an effective digital rapid response process and perhaps a "speakers bureau" to help sympathetic non-member institutions to get presentations on our shared concerns. They also are hoping to expand the coalition into other possible organizations, such as interfaith organizations, people and organizations from the medical community, especially into the mental and behavioral health world and perhaps considering gaining support from organizations, such as labor unions (teacher and health care), chambers of commerce, even responsible gun owners, law enforcement, and civic organizations like Rotary or Kiwanis. Finally, we agreed there will be another meeting in April or May at the end of the legislative session.

Before April, we also reviewed near-term upcoming events several which I think are really a interest to Veterans for Peace. [Note the last paragraph below related to ICE.]:

1. A recurring one, which took place the day after our meeting was the January 30 "intimate partner homicide memorial" that recalls the people killed in the previous year.

In 2025 there were about thirty victims, mostly women, being remembered with stories on-line;

2. The 2026 political caucuses on Tuesday, Feb. 3. The coalition has one resolution calling for banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines – see attached draft resolution for Democratic caucuses,
3. Rally on February 13 of people, engaged in healthcare called Healers Demand Action, and this is part of a general effort to try to take advantage of the concern that many who do healthcare are really sort of the first line of people engaged in treating victims of gun violence. Anyone reading this who works in healthcare may want to get involved with this. There's a group of healthcare providers concern with gun violence called Minnesota Healers for Change 9find them on the web!
4. On February 14, Valentine's Day, there is a rally at the Capitol at 10:00 a.m. called No More Broken Hearts. It is supporting more work against domestic violence.
5. On March 12 and March 13, the gun violence coalition advocacy days are taking place at the Capitol
6. Please follow news and any possible actions related to the Farm Fleet Trial. As you may know this is the retailer that has been charged with not policing well the sale of weapons allowing people by guns for others and not worrying about monitoring.

### **Conclusion:**

Protect MN has a “Root Causes Platform” where they can throw support behind other bills that address some of the upstream or root causes of (or protective factors for) gun violence. Please update us about opportunities to support other bills. Before ending this report, I want to summarize two characteristics of the meeting that may relate to “Root Causes” and were not part of any single element on the formal agenda.

While this meeting was only half the length of the October meeting [because there was much less time spent on introductions and we began after lunch (losing no time for eating)], the meeting was at least as productive as the one in October. Both meetings were shaped by a different specific case of gun violence, that I believe focused thinking. Obviously, the cloud over the October meeting was the Annunciation shootings. Now, as raised immediately by one of participants from Duluth, were the murders of Renee Good and Alex Pretti. We moved fairly quickly on to the legislative issues, however, during break and final casual discussions it was clear, instead of the mass casualty concerns after Annunciation, now there was the culture of violence symbolized by the murders and, worse, the casual dismissal of the evil of murder by those officials trying to justify the excuse of fighting domestic terrorism. How do we legislatively or even judicially address the culture of violence displayed by the recent use of disguised “law enforcement” warriors with too many weapons.

Without going into too much detail [and some of this already was referenced above], the general tenor of the meeting came back to the disturbing data Johns Hopkins summarized related to 2024 data. While Minnesota homicides are low compared to most states (we're 6<sup>th</sup> lowest), our rate has been rising for a decade. The final data for 2024 is we had 582 deaths by

gun, of which  $\frac{3}{4}$  were suicides. Guns account for  $\frac{2}{3}$  of homicides. While youth under 18 accounted for only 21 of the 582 deaths, guns were the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of child deaths. By ethnicity, blacks had 26 times the gun death rate of whites and American Indians were 17 times the white rate. Males have four times the homicide rate as women. Focusing on suicide, where half are by guns, males are ten times more likely to kill themselves than women. Veterans are more than 25% of Minnesota suicides. But, in conclusion, as Veterans for Peace members know and have demonstrated so well, some veterans know very well how to confront and undermine this “culture of violence.”

**EXHIBIT K**

**Letter to local Fox News station**

To: Mr. Kilat Fitzgerald, Editor, [kilat.fitzgerald@fox.com](mailto:kilat.fitzgerald@fox.com)

I write in response to the quote from the Minnesota Gun Owners Caucus in your article, "Annunciation shooting: Rally calls for assault weapon ban 1 month after tragedy."

I represented Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace when I had the honor to speak during the "Don't Look Away" rally yesterday at the Capitol. I heard the parents of the victims of the Annunciation School and Church shooting speak with superhuman courage about their children despite their impossible burdens of grief.

For the Minnesota Gun Owners Caucus to state that the rally was "political theater" is utterly disgusting. Implying that these grieving parents are actors in "political theater" means they have now joined the ranks of Alex Jones and others who repeatedly accused the victims and grieving family members of the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School and the 2018 Parkland Florida shootings of being "crisis actors."

Instead of insulting people, the Gun Owners Caucus should work with us to protect our children from these weapons of war that can massacre them in minutes.

Michael Orange, Coordinator  
Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace, (USMC Vietnam 1969-70)

## EXHIBIT L



### Veterans For Peace Chapter 27 612-821-9141

200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 7 Website: [vfpchapter27.org](http://vfpchapter27.org)  
Minneapolis MN 55407 Email: [vfpchapter27@gmail.org](mailto:vfpchapter27@gmail.org)

#### Support of a Minnesota Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

Updated: 9/23/2025

**What we want.** We want the Legislature to approve a ban on the sale and transfer of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, which would make Minnesota the eleventh state to do so. These mass “killing machines,” especially assault rifles, are semiautomatic versions of weapons created for deadly battlefield purposes. We know they are the weapon of choice for mass murderers, responsible for most of the devastating mass shootings, including mass shootings in our schools. An analysis of public mass shootings resulting in four or more deaths found that more than 85% of such fatalities were caused by assault rifles.<sup>1</sup> An assailant with an assault rifle is able to hurt and kill twice the number of people compared to an assailant with a non-assault rifle or handgun.<sup>2</sup> An article in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* stated, “AR-15 bullets can penetrate the soft body armor typically worn by police, which is built to stop handgun rounds.”<sup>3</sup>

**Veterans know first-hand the damage these weapons of war cause.** One Vietnam vet described how two young Vietnamese boys planted a bomb on his fire support base that went off prematurely. The assault rifle rounds fired by his fellow Marines literally ripped and exploded the boys’ bodies to shreds as they tried to escape. An Army medic in Vietnam described how an M16 round entered the left wrist of an attacking enemy soldier, traveled along his arm, through his chest and abdomen, and finally exited out the top of his right thigh.

**Such horror stories aren’t limited to veterans.** An emergency room doctor said damage done by assault rifle bullets looks like a grenade went off in a body, while damage from a 9mm handgun bullet looks like a bad knife cut. The gunman with assault weapons at a Las Vegas concert fired 1,000 rounds in ten minutes, murdering 60 people and injuring nearly 900. The damage was so devastating for the victims of the Robb Elementary School massacre in Uvalde, Texas, parents had to submit DNA swabs to identify the remains of their children.<sup>4</sup> Using his legally acquired assault rifle, the shooter at Annunciation Church and School in Minneapolis on 8/27/25 fired 116 high-powered, military rounds in just a few minutes killing 2 children and wounding 23 people including 20 children.

**We know that bans are legal and effective.** Numerous studies confirm that national and state bans save lives. When we had a nationwide, assault-weapons ban (1994-2004), the risk of dying in a mass shooting was 70% lower than in the following decade after Congress killed the effort to extend it.<sup>5</sup> According to a study published in *Applied Economics Letters*, “[I]t was found that assault weapons bans in the states that approved them reduced the number of school shooting victims by 54.4%.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, a Johns Hopkins University study stated, “We found very encouraging effects. ... On a per capita basis, we see a 70% lower rate of individuals killed in mass shootings associated with state bans of [high-capacity magazines].”<sup>7</sup>

**We know that the experts and Minnesotans want them.** A 2022 poll found that 54% of Minnesota voters wanted a ban on assault weapons, and 57% favored stopping the sale of high-capacity magazines.<sup>8</sup> Gov. Walz has also voiced his strong support.<sup>9, 10</sup> The mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul and seven other cities stated support for a ban, and the city councils of Minneapolis and West St. Paul approved formal resolutions in support. The following supporters of a state ban submitted gun violence prevention proposals for the 9/15/25 hearing of the Minnesota Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group:<sup>11</sup>

- Minnesota Medical Association (10,000 members)
- Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians (3,000 members)
- Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (1,000 members)

## Support of a Minnesota Ban on the Sale and Transfer of Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

- Children's Defense Fund Minnesota
- Minnesota Parent-Teacher Associations
- School psychologists, Jessie Kember, Ph.D., Anna Li, Ph.D., and Mollie Weeks, Ph.D.
- Multicultural Autism Action Network
- Protect Minnesota
- Giffonds Law Center

We know the gun industry is about profit not protection. Their ghoulish marketing now targets women and children even though the plague of gun violence is the leading cause of death for American youth.<sup>12</sup> Our schools—with their regular, lock-down drills—have become a place of fear for our children. Yet the industry's latest weapon is a smaller assault rifle for kids, the JR15, that fires a .22 caliber round. Advertising includes the company's logo that features child skulls with rifle crosshairs for eyes and a pacifier.



**It's about the guns.** When it comes to mass shootings, it's about banning these weapons of war, not some imaginary Second Amendment right to buy them,<sup>11</sup> nor the dodge of blaming inadequate mental health services,<sup>12</sup> nor the lie that AR-15-style rifles are not "weapons of war." When firing either military or civilian ammunition, AR-15-style rifles are actually more powerful than the military's standard-issue, M4 assault rifle that replaced the M16. What is more important is that this ammunition can tumble and fragment upon impact, which makes them horribly deadly. It's about our citizens—especially our children—and the lives that would be saved by this ban.

Contact person: Michael Orange, orange\_michael@yahoo.com, 952-905-1448 (US/MAC, Vietnam, 1969-70)

For more information, see *Everytown for Gun Safety*, <https://www.everytown.org>, *Brady*, <https://www.bradyunited.org>, and *Giffords*, <https://giffords.org/brady-2019>. Two *Washington Post* articles provide graphic explanations of the grisly effects of high-powered, assault weapon rounds.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Source: Oxforda, <https://oxforda.org/lexicon/glossary/policy-areas/hardware-annexation/journal-express-10may2019>. (2019)

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of Offenders, 2004*

<sup>1</sup>Source: "A 'good guy with a gun' doesn't stand much of a chance against an AR-15 style rifle and body armor," Ralph A. White, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 6/14/2012.

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-statements/2017/04/05/remarks-by-president-trump-on-gun-violence-in-america/> - [www.TheHill.com/news/2017/04/05/2017-04-05-trump-remarks-on-gun-violence-in-america/](http://www.TheHill.com/news/2017/04/05/2017-04-05-trump-remarks-on-gun-violence-in-america/)

<sup>1</sup>Source: "Did the assault weapons ban of 1994 bring down mass shootings? Here's what the data tells us," Michael J. Klein, Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, New York University, The Conversation, 6/6/23, <https://theconversation.com/did-the-assault-weapons-ban-of-1994-bring-down-mass-shootings-heres-what-the-data-tells-us-194436>.

<sup>11</sup> "The effects of state and Federal gun control laws on school shootings," *Mark Gius, Applied Economics Letters*, 8/19/2011.

http://www.sandwell.com/forthe18/1849/1849000012011000000

<sup>1</sup> "Police: The Ruckus Gap Victim: Restoring Large Capacity Magazine," David Wolcott, Johns Hopkins University, 3/34, 2011.

<https://pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlehtml/2021/ta/ta00000> publishes that volume goes to reference containing large capacity.

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<sup>2</sup> "New MassPac poll shows majority support for stronger gun laws in the state following Uvalde massacre," *Orlando Sentinel*, MassPac, 06/16/2022.

https://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav. 2023 We have accepted full-blown capacity support for stronger gas laws in the state following a wide measure.

<sup>10</sup> "Wade makes gun control-control to point for third time," in *Congress, Gov. Tim Wade received an "A" rating from the NRA. Now he wants action to curb gun violence*, *Albany Kids, Massachusetts Star Tribune*, 9/17/2005, <http://www.startribune.com/a-book-of-makes-policy-of-evolution-on-guns-as-for-fundamentalism>. Accessed 10/10/2014 11:18 AM.

<sup>15</sup> Bureau, <https://www.bureau.org/press/2020/06/16/gov-wants-to-revive-research-but-not-the-act>.

<sup>12</sup> However, before there is any discussion about whether the

<sup>20</sup> Source: "Preventing Sexual Violence and Injuries Impacting Children and Youth," Centers for Disease Control, 12/16/14, <https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/child-youth/cysexualviolence/child-and-youth-injuries.html> – last consultation: 19/06/2020; <https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/child-youth/cysexualviolence/child-and-youth-injuries.html> – last consultation: 19/06/2020.

<sup>12</sup> On June 25, 2008, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed by a vote of 5 to 4 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in *Heller* v. District of Columbia and established that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess firearms for self-defense in the home. The Court also specified that this protection extends to "arms" in common use for lawful purposes, such as self-defense, and that handguns are "arms" for the purposes of the Second Amendment. The decision does not protect weapons that are not "in common use" for lawful purposes, such as military weapons.<sup>13</sup>

\* Claiming it's a mental health issue is just a dodge. The Trump Administration and Congressional Republicans cut \$11.8 billion from various mental and behavioral health services that Democrats in Congress were able to approve over Republican opposition during the prior four years. Blaming inadequate mental health services is just bad and selfish propaganda from the one lobby and the NRA.

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