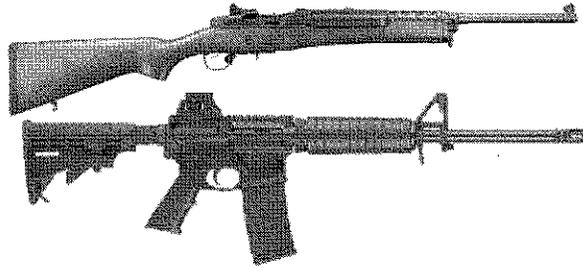


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I am a Fire Commissioner, a Member of my Volunteer Fire Dept., and a certified EMR in my local ambulance corps; *911* calls *me*. As a first responder, I take public safety matters very seriously. I am also a professional firearms safety educator, certified by the NRA and the Massachusetts State Police to teach gun safety. I find it ironic that many of the proposals in front of you come from those who, in the name of so-called "gun safety," are seeking to confuse people into supporting bans on certain firearms. None of what they are doing, including their smears of law-abiding gun owners, will do a thing to promote safety. Many of them have been waiting for decades for a perfect storm like Newtown to exploit and politicize, and they have pounced eagerly on this tragedy as a golden opportunity to push victim disarmament.

They say that nobody "**needs**" so-called "assault weapons" (which is nothing but a political label). What is the difference between the ranch rifle in the top photo and the so-called "assault weapon" below it? *Perception*. These two guns are identical, both semi-automatic, which means they fire one bullet each time the trigger is squeezed. They are actually the same rifle, wearing different clothing. The one on the bottom is more menacing looking, and that's what bans on so-called "military *style*" guns are all about: *style*. Labels. Perception. And it is deception. Banning a gun because of what it looks like will not make anyone safer. What nobody **needs** is new bans on perfectly normal, common and typical



guns, in fact the most popular gun in America. And this, in the hands of a law-abiding citizen, is a highly useful **defense** weapon. And it is such a well-suited **Personal Defense Weapon** that it is called precisely that in the DHS's procurement documents, while police departments across the country are arming their officers with it. Citizens require and have the right to the same level of personal protection as law enforcement, especially because we are rarely wearing body armor or have access to backup when attacked. This includes the same standard (not reduced) capacity magazines. If cops (trained professionals) can only hit their target about 20% in police shooting incidents, how do you expect us mere mortals to fend off multiple assailants while stuck with fewer rounds?

SB 1076 is one of the most toxic pieces of infringement I have ever seen, although most of the other bills being proposed here also violate our rights as citizens while doing nothing to improve public safety. In fact, most of them only further endanger victims while emboldening violent criminals.

It was a 1996 school shooting that prompted the British to enact total gun confiscation (which was made easier by first requiring all firearms to be registered with the government, so they knew exactly who had what). After that, violent crime skyrocketed, their violent crime rate is far above that of the United States, and the UK has earned the title of violent crime capital of Europe. Draconian gun control hasn't worked over there, and it won't work here. We need to enforce the thousands of laws already on the books, not enact new laws that will punish law abiding citizens for the crimes of a few. And for heaven's sake, do **not** enact new legislation hastily without waiting to see the State Police's official report! I promise those of you who do will not be re-elected.

Michael J. Butler