

Protect Illinois Communities Act

⚠️ THE PROBLEM – Assault Weapons, High Capacity Magazines and Switches Are Fueling the Gun Violence Crisis

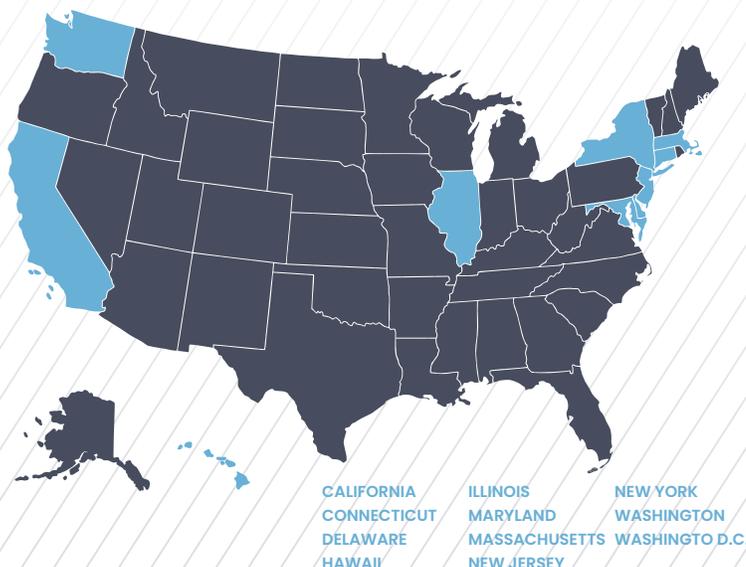
Assault weapons are designed for rapid and efficient attack and have transformed gun violence in our communities, making mass shootings more deadly and frequent.

High-capacity magazines are ammunition feeding devices that allow bad actors to fire multiple rounds in quick succession without taking the time to reload, increasing a shooter's ability to kill more people quickly and efficiently. Includes both detachable and fixed magazines.¹

Switches are attachments that convert legal handguns into military-style assault weapons.²

- 155% more people are shot and 47% more people are killed when assault weapons or high-capacity magazines are used
- From 2016 to 2018, assault weapons were responsible for the deaths of 1 in 5 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty³
- Large-capacity magazines have been used in all ten of the deadliest mass shootings in the last decade.

WHERE ASSAULT WEAPONS ARE BANNED IN THE UNITED STATES



✅ THE SOLUTION – The Protecting Illinois Communities Act (PICA)

On January 10, 2023, Illinois became the 9th state to pass comprehensive legislation banning the sale and possession of assault weapons. The law goes into effect on January 1, 2024 and makes it illegal to knowingly possess an assault weapon or assault weapon attachment.⁴

The law classifies weapons as assault weapons if:

They are included on a list of specific firearm models or are copies, duplicates, variants, or altered facsimiles with the capability of those specified firearms, or

They include certain combinations of features or characteristics that are indicative of assaultive purposes. For example, this standard generally defines semiautomatic rifles as assault weapons if they are:

- Semiautomatic rifles that have fixed large-capacity magazines holding over 10 rounds of ammunition (not including an attached tubular device designed to accept and capable of operating only with .22 caliber rimfire ammunition)
- Semiautomatic rifles that have the capacity to accept detachable magazines or that may be readily modified to accept detachable magazines, if they also have at least one of the following assaultive features:
 - A pistol grip or thumbhole stock
 - Any feature capable of functioning as a protruding grip that can be held by the non-trigger hand
 - A folding, telescoping, thumbhole, or detachable stock, or a stock that is otherwise foldable or adjustable in a manner that operates to reduce the length, size, or any other dimension, or otherwise enhances the concealability of the weapon
 - A flash suppressor
 - A grenade launcher
 - A shroud attached to the barrel or that partially or completely encircles the barrel, allowing the bearer to hold the firearm with the non-trigger hand without being burned, but not including a slide that encloses the barrel.

Similar standards also apply to classify certain semiautomatic pistols and shotguns as assault weapons, as well as shotguns with revolving cylinders, and any part or combination of parts designed to convert a firearm into an assault weapon.⁵

Bans assault weapons

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The law also requires existing owners of semiautomatic rifles to register their weapons, enhancing law enforcement's ability to track these firearms.

Bans switches

PICA bans switches in Illinois, making it illegal to knowingly manufacture, deliver, sell, import, purchase or to cause another person to manufacture, deliver, sell, import, or purchase an assault weapon attachment.

Restricts sale of high-capacity magazines

PICA bans the sale of magazines that have more than 15 rounds of ammunition for handguns and more than 10 rounds of ammunition for a long gun.

- From 1994–2004 there was a federal ban on assault weapons, and during that decade, mass shooting fatalities were 70% less likely to occur compared to the periods before and after the ban.⁶
- Studies indicate that states with assault weapons bans prevent mass shootings.

MORE ABOUT THE PROTECTING ILLINOIS COMMUNITIES ACT:

Extends the use of firearm restraining orders, sometimes called Red Flag Laws

PICA extends the court's ability to use firearm restraining orders to prevent individuals who pose a risk to themselves or others from having access to firearms.

- Extends duration of a Firearm Restraining Order (FRO) from 6 months to one year. Gives states attorneys standing to assist in filing a FRO.
- Enacts Universal Background Checks for Private gun sales starting July 1, 2023, ensuring background checks are completed for every gun sale in Illinois.
- Creates Illinois State Police anti-gun trafficking strike force

Exemptions

PICA provides an exception for people to remain in continued possession of assault weapons they legally obtained and possessed before the assault weapons law went into effect if they comply with a set of requirements and limitations on public use and carry. The law also includes limitations to prevent these exempt legacy assault weapons from being used or carried in most public locations.

How to qualify for a legacy exemption

Electronically submit an endorsement affidavit form to the Illinois State Police by October 1, 2023 with specified information including the weapon's make, model, and serial number and the person's Firearm Owner's Identification (FOID) Card number.

New residents to the state who wish to bring an assault weapon or attachment into the state must apply for a FOID Card and submit an assault weapon endorsement application within 60 days.⁷

Private property exemption

PICA generally permits people to possess assault weapons and assault weapon attachments only on their own private property, or with the express permission of another person to carry on private property that is not open to the public, or in certain other designated locations such as a licensed firing range, or while traveling to or from these permissible locations if the assault weapon is kept unloaded and enclosed in a case or container during transport.

Sources

1 Illinois General Assembly, State of Illinois, "[Public Act 102-1116, 720 ILCS 5/24-1.9 \(3\)\(7\)\(6\).](#)"

2 Illinois General Assembly, State of Illinois, "[Public Act 102-1116, 720 ILCS 5/24-1.9 \(3\).](#)"

3 Violence Policy Center, "[New Data Shows One in Five Law Enforcement Officers Slain in the Line of Duty from 2016 to 2018 Were Felled by an Assault Weapon February 3, 2021.](#)"

4-7 Giffords Law Center, "[Assault Weapons in Illinois. Updated January 3, 2023.](#)"