

Illinois House Approves Modified Ban On High-Powered Weapons/Large-Capacity Magazines Early Friday

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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SPRINGFIELD - The Illinois House of Representatives has passed a modified ban on high-powered weapons and large-capacity magazines early Friday. The bill passed along

party lines in the House Executive Committee Thursday afternoon. The assault weapons legislation quickly advanced to the full House and after late-night debate passed on a 64-43 vote.

The bill is scheduled now to head to the Senate. Some legislators are hopeful it is voted on before the new set of legislators is sworn in on Wednesday. The bill would ban the sale of assault-style weapons and high-capacity magazines with more than 12 rounds. Anyone in possession of those magazines would have 90 days to convert, dispose or sell them.

Those who already own assault-style weapons would be grandfathered in, but have 300 days to enter the serial number of those weapons into the FOID system.

A spokesperson for Illinois Senate President Don Harmon said: "These are critically important issues, and the Senate Democratic Caucus is committed to enacting the most effective legislation possible. Senators are giving these proposals an extensive review and careful evaluation."

"We're talking about banning the sale of assault weapons in the state of Illinois," State Rep. Bob Morgan-D-Highwood, said. "We're talking about banning the sale of high-capacity magazines that are plaguing our communities with gun violence. And now is the time. We cannot wait."

Morgan filed two amendments Thursday changing some key parts of the bill. A proposal to change the age of legal gun ownership has been dropped, the ban on magazines has loosened from 10-round to 12-round, and they have weakened a penalty for violating the magazine ban to a misdemeanor with a fine. Morgan was present at the time of the July 4 shooting in Highland Park that killed seven people and 48 others were wounded by bullets or shrapnel.

Republicans largely did not support the bill, arguing that the bill is ineffective and will only punish law-abiding gun owners.

Alton Republican Representative Amy Elik issued this statement on the House decision: "I voted against the firearm ban as I believe this bill is unconstitutional. I support the Second Amendment. The bill approved will hinder the right to keep and bear arms for law-abiding gun owners. The legislature should get tough on crime and stop punishing law-abiding citizens."

“You are turning legal gun owners with this bill into felons,” Rep. C. D. Davidsmeyer (R-Jacksonville) said. “We don’t know what the answer is to mental instability, right to frustrated children that have mental issues or whatever it may be. We’re doing something here that is going to harm more legal citizens than anything.”

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker released the following statement regarding the House’s passage of the bill.

"For months lawmakers and advocates have been hard at work negotiating two very critical pieces of legislation to keep Illinoisans safe. Tonight, with the leadership and support of Speaker Welch, the Illinois House passed critical reproductive health protections and an assault weapons ban. The people of Illinois send us to Springfield to tackle tough issues and these bills are historic steps in the right direction. I look forward to working with our colleagues in the Illinois Senate to get bills addressing these issues to my desk so I can sign them as soon as possible.

"I’d like to thank Rep. Cassidy for her tireless work to protect reproductive healthcare and Rep. Morgan for his work to get weapons of war off our streets.”

One of the votes for the bill includes outgoing House Minority Leader Jim Durkin (R-Western Springs).

“Enough is enough,” Durkin said.

Mark Maggos, of Trigger Talent and a gun enthusiast, is an instructor for people for Illinois State Conceal and Carry licenses.

"It violates the Second Amendment of the constitution," Maggos said. "People say we don't need AR-15s to hunt rabbits, but the Second Amendment does not mention hunting specifically, and it was written to prevent tyranny in our government."

Maggos said from what he has read, the Illinois Senate has adjourned until Sunday afternoon and there have been three readings of this bill in the Senate.

"I don't believe this law will pass the scrutiny of the Supreme Court," Maggos said. "It will be challenged immediately by gun groups. This appears to be a move by Pritzker as a platform for him to run for president. I think he believes this is another feather in his cap if this is passed and he signs it. This is against the supremacy clause of the Constitution to pass a bill that is in conflict with a federal bill and it woefully violates our Second Amendment in the Bill of Rights."