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**How the "Assault Weapons Ban and Law Enforcement Protection Act of 2003"  
Compares with the Current Federal Assault Weapons Ban**

<b>Current Law</b>	<b>The "Assault Weapons Ban and Law Enforcement Protection Act of 2003"</b>
Expires on September 14, 2004, ten years after enactment.	Implements a permanent assault weapons ban.
Applies only to a small number of "assault weapons." The gun industry has evaded the current ban by producing "sporterized" assault weapons—guns with minor cosmetic alterations, but that retain the characteristics of true assault weapons. For example, the Bushmaster XM15 assault rifle used by the Washington, D.C.-area snipers is a post-ban assault rifle.	Improves and simplifies the definition of "assault weapon," to capture all assault weapons. The definition is modeled on California's effective assault weapon law. For example, the snipers' Bushmaster assault rifle cannot be sold in California.
Defines an "assault weapon" as a firearm that can accept a detachable magazine and has <i>two</i> other characteristics that are sometimes or often included on assault weapons (required characteristics vary for pistols, rifles, and shotguns).	Defines an "assault weapon" as a firearm that can accept a detachable magazine and has <i>one</i> other assault weapon characteristic. Extraneous characteristics—such as bayonet lugs—that are included in current law are deleted.

<p>Characteristics used to define “assault weapon”—such as “pistol grip” and “folding stock”—are not defined.</p>	<p>Adds clear definitions of enumerated assault weapon characteristics. These definitions are necessary to clarify problematic administrative interpretations of these terms. For example, the term “pistol grip” is not necessarily interpreted to include similar characteristics—such as a thumbhole stock—that perform the same function as a pistol grip. Such narrow interpretations have aided the gun industry’s development of “sporterized” assault weapons that circumvent current law.</p>
<p>Leaves open a loophole that allows the sale of “parts kits” that can be used to build home-made assault weapons.</p>	<p>Expands coverage of the ban to include parts sets that can be bought through the mail and used to build an assault weapon. There has been an exponential growth in the availability of such kits over the last few years.</p>
<p>Grandfathers all assault weapons legally possessed prior to September 14, 1994. These grandfathered weapons may be transferred without restriction.</p>	<p>Requires that all future transfers of grandfathered assault weapons be conducted through a federal firearms licensee or a local law enforcement agency where state law provides for that option. This will ensure that a background check is performed and records are maintained of all transfers.</p>

<p>Also grandfathers high-capacity ammunition magazine holding more than ten rounds. Contains a loophole that allows manufacturers to sell post-ban assault weapons equipped with high capacity ammunition magazines if those magazines were manufactured prior to the ban.</p>	<p>Bans the sale of post-ban assault weapons equipped with high-capacity magazines. This prevents importers, manufacturers, dealers and collectors from transferring any assault weapon equipped with a post-ban, high-capacity ammunition magazine. The bill also requires that high-capacity magazines transferred after enactment be certified as legitimate grandfathered magazines. The bill would also prohibit the importation of high-capacity ammunition magazines.</p>
<p>Allows juveniles under the age of 18 to buy and possess assault rifles and shotguns, although it is illegal for juveniles to acquire or possess assault pistols.</p>	<p>Establishes a uniform ban on assault weapon possession by juveniles, prohibiting possession of any assault weapon by persons under the age of 18.</p>