

study in several cities did show a significant decline in the criminal use of assault weapons during the ban. According to the study, however, that decline was offset by the "steady or rising use" of other guns equipped with high-capacity magazines—ammunition-feeding devices that hold more than 10 rounds.

While the 1994 ban prohibited the manufacture and sale of such magazines, it did not outlaw an estimated 25 million of them already in circulation, nor did it stop the importation of millions more into the country.

Senator Feinstein said she wished she could outlaw the "flood of big clips" from abroad, calling that the "one big loophole" in the ban. But that would require amending the bill, and Republicans like Senator John W. Warner of Virginia and Senator Mike DeWine of Ohio are willing to back it only without amendments, she said.

Some gun-control advocates say it is pointless to reintroduce the 1994 ban without amending it to include large magazines and a wider range of guns. They see more promise in enacting or strengthening state or local bans. Seven states—California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey and New York—already have bans, most based on the federal one. The model ban, gun-control advocates say, is a comprehensive one in California (referred to as "Commieifornia" on some gun enthusiast Web sites).

The Fraternal Order of Police has not made a new federal ban a legislative priority, either. Mr. Pasco, the organization's director, said he could not recall a single "inquiry from the field about the reauthorization of the ban—and we have 330,000 members who are very vocal."

"In 1994, I was the principal administration lobbyist on this ban," said Mr. Pasco, who then worked for the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. "But here we are 10 years later, and these weapons do not appear to pose any more significant threat to law enforcement officers than other weapons of similar caliber and capability."

The ban made it illegal to possess or sell a semiautomatic weapon manufactured after September 1994 if the weapon accepted a detachable magazine and contained at least two features from a list that included protruding pistol grips and threaded muzzles. The ban outlawed 19 weapons by name, among them some foreign semiautomatics already banned under the 1989 firearms importation law, which still stands.

But gun manufacturers increased production of assault weapons while the ban was being debated. Then, by making minor changes in design, they were able to produce, as they called them, "post-ban" assault weapons that were the functional equivalent of the originals.

Colt came out with a "sporterized" version of its popular AR-15 semiautomatic rifle, leaving off some military features that were "meaningless as far as its lethality," said Carlton S. Chen, vice president and general counsel for Colt.

"People might think it looks less evil," Mr. Chen said, "but it's the same weapon. It was a hoax, a Congressional hoax, to ban all these different features."

Mr. Pasco of the police organization disagreed. "We knew exactly what we were doing by trying to ban guns with certain features," he said. "While it didn't affect their function or capability, those features, at that point in time, seemed to make those weapons more attractive to those who wanted to commit crimes."

Gun-control advocates say military-style semiautomatics do not belong in civilian hands. "They are weapons of war," Senator Feinstein said, "and you don't need these assault weapons to hunt."

Gun makers, however, say the weapons do have sporting uses, in hunting and in target shooting. "People buy these rifles because they're fun to shoot and they perform well," Mr. Luth of DPMS said. "They also like them because you can jazz them up like you can your car. You can custom-paint them, put on a multitude of handguards or buttstocks."

Some collectors simply admire certain guns. Charles Cuzalina, a gun dealer in Oklahoma who specializes in banned weapons, is taken with the Colt AR-15.

"I just like the look of the weapon," Mr. Cuzalina said. "When I bought my first, I went out on the farm shooting at a pie plate, and I realized how accurate it makes you. You think you're the world's best shot."

Mark Westrom, owner of ArmaLite Inc., a gun maker in Illinois, said prey hunters and target shooters did not miss bayonet lugs and other features that disappeared with the post-ban rifles. Collectors looking for an exact civilian replica of a military rifle, however, consider the removal of a bayonet lug "a matter of design defacement," Mr. Westrom said.

Several manufacturers are offering factory conversions or selling kits so gun owners can retrofit their post-ban weapons. They are also increasing their production of pre-ban weapons and decreasing production of post-ban weapons.

Many gun store owners say that sales of assault weapons spiked briefly in September and October. Gun dealers sought to capitalize on the ban's sunset and, during the presidential campaign, to raise the specter of a tougher ban if John Kerry won.

"We view this time as a 'pause' and urge you to take advantage of the opportunity to exercise your Second Amendment rights," Tapco, a shooting and military gear company, said on its Web site last fall. "Anti-gun politicians learned much over the past 10 years. They will surely not leave as many loopholes in future legislation."

After President Bush was re-elected and the novelty of the ban's expiration waned, sales leveled off at many gun shops. But Mike Mathews, the owner of Gunworld in Del City, Okla., said sales had been holding steady at a higher level.

Norm Giguere of Norm's Gun & Ammo in Biddeford, Me., on the other hand, said that he had not sold any military-style semiautomatic rifles since right after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and that the gun business in general was "going down the tubes."

Mr. Luth of DPMS, however, said that his sales had been increasing for years, to the law enforcement community, the civilian market and an unexpected new clientele. "We've picked up new customers with the troops returning from Iraq," he said, "who had never shot an AR-15 before and now want one."

The war in Iraq has had another unintended consequence for the marketplace. Colt, one of the biggest manufacturers, has decided against putting its AR-15 back on the civilian market because the company is backlogged with military orders.

Unlike assault weapons, high-capacity magazines, which are used with many guns, have been selling briskly since the ban ended because prices have dropped considerably.

"The only thing Clinton ever did for us was drive up the price of magazines," said a weapons specialist named Stuart at TargetMaster, a shooting range and gun shop in Garland, Tex. (He declined to give his last name.) "A 17-round Glock magazine crept up to \$150 during the ban. It's \$75 now."

Since September, the Web site of Taurus International Manufacturing Inc., a major maker of small arms, has celebrated the demise of the prohibition on magazines, flash-

ing in red letters, "10 years of 10 rounds are over!"

HONORING MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE W. KEEFE IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SERVICE AS ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NATIONAL GUARD

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the career of Major General George W. Keefe, who recently retired from his post as the 41st Adjutant General of the Massachusetts National Guard. Major General Keefe, appointed interim Adjutant General on July 24, 1999, and Adjutant General January 7, 2000, was the first Air Force officer to hold this position.

Born and raised in Northampton, Massachusetts, Major General Keefe attended Holyoke College, where he received an Associate in Business degree. He joined the Massachusetts Air National Guard in 1956 as a Crash Fire Rescue Specialist and rose to the enlisted rank of Master Sergeant in Westfield's 104th Tactical Fighter Group.

Upon becoming an officer, Major General Keefe served in various capacities within the Massachusetts Air National Guard, including the 104th Combat Support Squadron Personnel Officer, Base Supply Operations Officer, Comptroller, and Chief of Supply. His leadership abilities elevated him to the positions of Commander of the 104th Resource Management Squadron, and Deputy Commander for Resources for the 104th Tactical Fighter Group. In 1993, the Major General became the Group's Vice Commander. Major General Keefe was selected as the Vice-Commander for the Massachusetts Air National Guard in 1994 and assumed the position of Assistant Adjutant General for Air in 1995.

As Adjutant General, Major General Keefe was the Governor's senior military advisor responsible for protecting life and property, preserving peace, order, and public safety in times of natural disaster and civil emergency. He also had a responsibility to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau for providing operationally trained, equipped and mission-ready forces to support national security objectives.

Major General Keefe is enshrined in the U.S. Air Force Enlisted Heritage Hall at Maxwell AFB as one of the only general officers who enlisted as an E-1, was promoted through the ranks to E-7, and then rose through the officer ranks from First Lieutenant to Major General. He holds several distinctions, including being the last member in uniform who served in the Berlin Call-up, serving at Plattsburg AFB from October 1961 to September 1962.

Among his awards and decorations, Major General Keefe has received the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with three oak leaf clusters), Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal (with Bronze Star), Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, and Armed Forces Service Medal. The Major General also has been awarded the Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon (with nine oak leaf clusters), Armed Forces Reserve Medal (with gold

and bronze hourglass device), Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon (with Bronze Star), Air Force Training Ribbon Massachusetts Medal of Merit, Massachusetts National Guard Service Medal (with gold eagle), Massachusetts National Guard Desert Storm Service Award and an Award for Heroism for the City of Northampton, Massachusetts.

Major General Keefe has four sons, Gary, James, Patrick and Timothy. Three of his sons are current members of the Massachusetts National Guard. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the nation owe Major General Keefe an enormous debt of gratitude for his service to his country. On behalf of my colleagues in the Massachusetts delegation, I commend Major General George W. Keefe for such a distinguished military career and I wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

INTRODUCING A BILL TO ENHANCE THE SECURITY OF THE U.S. PAS- SENGER AIR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Congressman OBERSTAR, Congressman DEFAZIO and I have introduced a bill to enhance the security of the U.S. passenger air transportation system—The Airport Screener Technology Improvement Act of 2005. We are currently collecting over \$1.5 billion a year from the passenger security fee for aviation security services. Our bill will put this fee into two funds that will guarantee that TSA will spend the authorized amounts of \$650 million a year and \$250 million for the installation of in-line baggage screening systems and passenger checkpoint explosive detection, respectively.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General (DHS IG) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) both released reports that indicate that our airport screening system still needs improvement. While the traveling public is more secure today than before September 11th, 2001, airport screeners are not detecting prohibited items at the level we need.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress has arbitrarily capped the number of airport screeners at 45,000, and has provided neither the resources nor the technology for the screeners to get the job done. Without a significant investment and commitment by Congress and this Administration to upgrade our technology, our screening system will continue to fail. We must and can do better!

Last year, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States ("the 9/11 Commission") specifically recommended that the TSA and the Congress improve the ability of screenings checkpoints to detect explosives on passengers. The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (P.L. 108-458) authorized \$250 million for the research and deployment of advanced passenger screening technologies, such as trace portals and backscatter x-ray systems. To date, only about \$30 million has been appropriated specifically for the general deployment of these types of technologies.

The 9/11 Commission also recommended that the TSA "expedite the installation of ad-

vanced (in-line) baggage screening equipment." The Chairman of the 9/11 Commission testified before Congress that the Commission supports moving explosives units out of airport lobbies and into a secured area which will allow for movement of bags from the check-in counter to the loading area in a seamless, in-line process, promoting greater security and efficiency.

In addition to these benefits, in-line baggage screening systems have a much higher throughput than stand-alone systems. If we install in-line systems, more bags will be screened by explosive detection systems instead of less reliable, alternative methods.

The TSA and airport operators rely on commitments in letters of intent (LOIs) as their principal method for funding the modification of airport facilities to incorporate in-line baggage screening systems. The TSA has issued eight LOIs to cover the costs of installing systems at nine airports for a total cost to the federal government of \$957.1 million over four years. The GAO reports that TSA has estimated that in-line baggage screening systems at the nine airports that received LOI funding could save the federal government \$1.3 billion over seven years. TSA further estimated that it could recover its initial investment in the in-line systems at these airports in a little over one year.

In total, the GAO reports that 86 of 130 airports surveyed are planning or are considering installing in-line baggage screening systems throughout or at a portion of their airports. Yet, the TSA has stated that it currently does not have sufficient resources in its budget to fund any additional LOIs. While \$650 million is authorized for the installation of in-line baggage screening systems, annual appropriations have not allowed for any new LOIs to be signed.

Mr. Speaker, the recommendations, findings and statements of the 9/11 Commission, the DHS IG, GAO and TSA all indicate that we need better technology to improve security at our airports. We have been put on notice, and we must take action now. We must demonstrate leadership and deploy technologies that will keep the American public safe and secure. I urge my colleagues to join me in working to pass this important legislation.

CONGRATULATING MR. BERNIE DITTMAN ON RECEIPT OF THE 2005 ALABAMA BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION'S BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to honor Mr. Bernie Dittman on the occasion of his being honored with the 2005 Alabama Broadcasters' Association's Broadcaster of the Year Award.

This award recognizes outstanding contributions made by members of the Alabama radio and television broadcast community in both their professional field and in the life of their local cities and towns. Bernie Dittman, a longtime friend and resident of Alabama's First Congressional District, as well as an active member of the state broadcasters' association, is a very worthy choice to receive this year's award.

Bernie purchased WABB-AM in Mobile, Alabama, in 1959. This station, previously owned

by the Mobile Register newspaper organization, first went on the air in 1948 with call letters that stand for "Alabama's Best Broadcasters." One year later, Bernie moved to Mobile and completely changed the broadcast format of the station. His conversion of WABB from a country station to Top 40 propelled WABB to the position of the leading station in that format and one of the premiere stations anywhere on Alabama's Gulf Coast. In 1973, Bernie took WABB in a new direction when the station added a new FM signal and began to broadcast a progressive rock format. At a time when most automobiles were not equipped with FM receivers, Bernie and his team ran an extensive series of on-air promotions encouraging the installation of low-cost FM receivers.

Under Bernie Dittman's leadership, WABB has become one of the longest-running and most successful Top 40 radio stations in the United States. The station has also spearheaded over the years the move to more equality in the hiring of on-air personalities and staff members; in fact, WABB was one of the stations in south Alabama which early on began to hire women and African-Americans for important announcer positions. WABB has also been a critical part of Mobile's emergency broadcast community and played a crucial role in providing information to listeners during Hurricane Frederic (1979) and Hurricane Ivan (2004). During Ivan, in fact, WABB was one of the few stations in the area able to transmit continuously during the storm without losing power. Following the end of the storm, the station also spearheaded the effort to collect and distribute relief material to neighboring states which had also been severely affected.

Aside from his professional obligations, Bernie has also ensured that WABB and its family of employees take an active role in the life of the Mobile community. For the past 47 years, the station has operated the WABB Community Club Awards Program of Greater Mobile, which has during its existence provided over \$250,000 in financial awards to local civic, religious, and cultural institutions. Additionally, the station has been a 40-year sponsor of the Greater Gulf State Fair, a 35-year sponsor of the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo, and a long-time sponsor of both the Senior Bowl and GMAC Bowl college football games. The Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Mobile, the United States Marine Corps Toys for Tots program, the Mobile Ronald McDonald House, and numerous other organizations advocating area youth have also benefited tremendously from Bernie Dittman's leadership and community involvement. In fact, the area Toys for Tots program holds the record for the single largest toy collection anywhere in the United States, with over 100,000 toys collected—due in large part to the efforts of Bernie and his entire team.

Bernie has also been a longtime member of the Alabama Broadcasters' Association and the National Association of Broadcasters, and in 2000 was the recipient of the Greater Mobile Advertising Federation Silver Medal Award.

Mr. Speaker, there have been few individuals more important to the broadcast profession in Alabama or to the life of their local