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[Home](#) > [Topics](#) > [Law](#) > [2nd Amendment: The Right to Bear Arms](#) > Impact Evaluation of the Public Safety and Recreational Firearm Use Protection Act of 1994 / Roth, Koper

Impact Evaluation of the Public Safety and Recreational Firearm Use Protection Act of 1994 / Roth, Koper

"At best, the assault weapons ban can have only a limited effect on total gun murders, because the banned weapons and magazines were never involved in more than a modest fraction of all gun murders. Our best estimate is that the ban contributed to a 6.7 percent decrease in total gun murders between 1994 and 1995, beyond what would have been expected in view of ongoing crime, demographic, and economic trends. However, with only one year of post-ban data, we cannot rule out the possibility that this decrease reflects chance year-to-year variation rather than a true effect of the ban. Nor can we rule out effects of other features of the 1994 Crime Act or a host of state and local initiatives that took place simultaneously. Further, any short-run preventive effect observable at this time may ebb in the near future as the stock of grandfathered assault weapons and legal substitute guns leaks to secondary markets, then increase as the stock of large-capacity magazines gradually dwindles."

[Jeffrey A. Roth](#) [1]

[Christopher S. Koper](#) [2]

[Impact Evaluation of the Public Safety and Recreational Firearm Use Protection Act of 1994](#) [3]

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The Urban Institute

March 13, 1997

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Library Topic: [2nd Amendment: The Right to Bear Arms](#) [4]

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