

California Senate approves gun-control bills

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Measures would ban detachable and large-capacity magazines, and also require background checks to buy or sell ammunition.



(Photo: Justin Sullivan, Getty Images)

Spurred by mass shootings in Connecticut, Colorado and Arizona, the California Senate on Wednesday approved seven bills to tighten regulations on guns and ammunition.

The measures would:

- Outlaw detachable (http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB374) magazines in rifles and so-called button bottoms (http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB47);
- Prohibit magazines (http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB396) that

hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition;

- Require background checks (http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB53) for all buyers and sellers of ammunition;
- Reclassify certain shotguns (http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB567) as assault weapons;
- Require all gun buyers to take a firearm-safety certificate class (<http://legiscan.com/CA/text/SB683/id/758538>);
- Expand crimes (http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/sen/sb_0751-0800/sb_755_bill_20130222_introduced.htm) that would result in a 10-year ban on owning or buying firearms. Additions include drug- and alcohol-related offenses, hazing, violations of protective orders and court-ordered mental health treatment.

The legislation cleared the Democratic-controlled chamber on party-line votes. All Republicans voted against the measures; four Democrats voted against the ammunition background checks.

The bills move to the Assembly, which is also controlled by Democrats.

"We all can recite the horrific acts that have occurred in our country over the last year," said Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, a Democrat representing Sacramento. "These bills attempt to respond to those well-publicized tragedies and many more that go unpublicized."

Background checks for ammunition is one of the most controversial measures. Here's how the *Los Angeles Times* summarizes (<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/political/la-me-pc-senate-approves-gun-bills-20130529,0,4224140.story>) it:

Californians who want to buy ammunition, and the vendors who sell it, would have to submit personal information for a background check to determine whether they have a criminal record, severe mental illness or a restraining order that would disqualify them from owning guns. Vendors would have to get permits starting July 1, 2015, and purchasers starting two years later. ...

Ammunition purchasers would submit their information and a \$50 fee to the state Department of Justice which would maintain a list of qualified buyers that would be checked by ammo stores. Purchasers would have to show their driver's license or other ID at the time they buy bullets.

Republican Sen. Jim Nielsen of Gerber said his colleagues were "criminalizing legal, historic behavior in the state of California and putting onerous burdens and regulations and requirements on law-abiding citizens."

One Democrat who also opposed the bill cited the constitutional right to own a gun.

"Implied in that is the right to buy the ammo to go with it," Sen. Roderick Wright of Inglewood.

In early May, Gov. Jerry Brown signed an eighth gun-control bill, SB 140. It boosts funding to confiscate guns from people who have criminal pasts or are mentally ill.