

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY SENATOR DYSON**

**Introduced: 3/20/09**

**Referred: State Affairs, Judiciary**

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Urging the United States Congress not to reinstate the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 **WHEREAS** studies by and for the National Institute of Justice, Congressional  
4 Research Service, Library of Congress, National Academy of Sciences, and Centers for  
5 Disease Control and Prevention have found no evidence that gun restrictions reduce crime;  
6 and

7 **WHEREAS** a study, mandated by the United States Congress, of the federal assault  
8 weapon and large magazine ban of 1994 - 2004 determined that the law had little or no effect  
9 on crime, in part because the firearms and magazines in question had previously been used in  
10 only a small percentage of crime; and

11 **WHEREAS** the 1994 law defined firearms as assault weapons based on factors that  
12 are irrelevant to criminal activity, such as the shape of a rifle's grip and other merely cosmetic  
13 characteristics; and

14 **WHEREAS** "assault weapon" is currently defined as a firearm capable of fully  
15 automatic fire; and

16 **WHEREAS** semi-automatic rifles and shotguns are widely used by sportsmen and

1 hunters and facilitate hunting and target shooting by handicapped citizens; and

2 **WHEREAS** state and local police department reports show that before, during and  
3 since the 1994 law, assault weapons have been used in only about one percent of murders,  
4 while over 30 percent of murders are committed without firearms of any sort; and

5 **WHEREAS** many rifles and shotguns that the 1994 law defined as assault weapons  
6 are widely used for defensive purposes, particularly for home protection; and

7 **WHEREAS** magazines that hold more than 10 rounds, which the 1994 law defined as  
8 large, are standard equipment on a variety of rifles and handguns designed for, readily  
9 adaptable to, or useful for defensive purposes; and

10 **WHEREAS** rifles that the 1994 law defined as assault weapons include the AR-15  
11 and M1A, the rifles most commonly used for marksmanship competition and training in the  
12 United States; and

13 **WHEREAS** magazines that the 1994 law defined as large are the type of magazines  
14 most often used for marksmanship competition and training in the United States; and

15 **WHEREAS**, contrary to the predictions of gun control supporters that the expiration  
16 of the 1994 law would result in a crime wave, total violent crime has fallen to a 35-year low,  
17 and, in particular, murder has fallen to a 43-year low, based on preliminary data reported by  
18 the Federal Bureau of Investigation for 2008; and

19 **WHEREAS** the Supreme Court of the United States, in its decision in District of  
20 Columbia v. Heller, 128 S.Ct. 2783 (2008), ruled that the Second Amendment to the  
21 Constitution of the United States protects the individual right to keep and bear arms primarily  
22 for defensive purposes;

23 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States  
24 Congress not to reinstate the 1994 Assault Weapons ban, in whole or in part.

25 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-  
26 President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi,  
27 Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of  
28 the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the  
29 Honorable John Boehner, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; and the  
30 Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the  
31 Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.