



"Large Capacity Ammunition Feeding Device Act" Fact Sheet

Shortly after 19 people, including Representative Gabrielle Giffords, were shot outside a Tucson, Arizona grocery store with a handgun equipped with a large capacity ammunition magazine, Rep. Carolyn McCarthy prepared the Large Capacity Ammunition Feeding Device Act for introduction in the 112th Congress to prohibit civilian possession of these military style magazines. **The Brady Campaign strongly supports this legislation.**

- **THE PROBLEM**

- Large capacity ammunition magazines are designed to enable shooting mass numbers of people quickly and efficiently without reloading. They have been used in numerous mass shootings, including in Tucson, Virginia Tech, Fort Hood, and Columbine, but they are not useful for hunting or self-defense.
- According to law enforcement, "There's absolutely no doubt the magazines increased the lethality and the body count of [the Tucson] attack."¹ The shooter was able to rapidly fire at least 30 shots from one magazine, hitting 19 people, including Rep. Giffords, killing 6, including a 9-year-old girl and a federal judge. The damage was limited to the firepower of his magazine; when it was empty, he was stopped while attempting to reload. Unfortunately, a large capacity magazine enabled him to fire more than three times the rounds of a standard magazine.
- New magazines containing more than 10 rounds were banned under the Federal Assault Weapons Act, but Congress did not renew the law in 2004, despite widespread support from over 70% of Americans.² Now only 6 states and D.C. limit the capacity of magazines.

- **WHAT THE ACT DOES**

- The Act makes it unlawful for a person to *possess* a large capacity ammunition magazine unless it was lawfully possessed before the bill was enacted. It also prohibits the *transfer or sale* of large capacity ammunition magazines.
- The Act defines large capacity ammunition magazines as those devices holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition.
- The Act does not restrict in any way the sale or possession of conventional-sized ammunition magazines used by sportsmen and other law-abiding firearms owners.
 - The bill eliminates a problem of the lapsed federal ban, as it prevents sellers from circumventing the law by stockpiling large capacity magazines, and then selling them after the ban takes effect.
- Leading experts on gun policy have concluded that banning high-capacity magazines is "a common-sense policy change that is likely to generate modest but important benefits to society at a very small cost, and so is worth doing."³

- **EXEMPTIONS**

- The Act contains exemptions for active and retired law enforcement, for certain federal and state departments and agencies, and allows manufacture, transfer, or possession of large capacity magazines for authorized testing or experimentation.

¹ http://openchannel.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2011/01/09/5801374-tucson-shooting-with-high-capacity-magazines-reignites-gun-debate.

² Over 70% favor banning large capacity ammunition magazines and assault weapons, The Harris Poll, Sept. 9-13, 2004.

³ <http://www.cnn.com/2011/OPINION/01/12/cook.ludwig.gun.control/>