

13-0068

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MOTION

On February 28, 1997, two heavily armed bank robbers entered a North Hollywood Bank of America. As an outgunned LAPD courageously responded, the two robbers emptied more than a thousand rounds of ammunition using fully automatic machine guns and an AR-15 assault rifle with high capacity drum magazines and armor piercing bullets. The North Hollywood shootout spilled out into the surrounding community and was one of the longest in U.S. police history. Sadly, it was not a unique example of the abuse of high-capacity magazines to commit horrendous crimes of violence against large numbers of innocent people in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

Last month, the lives of 20 children and six adult staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School were tragically taken by a gunman carrying three weapons, including an AR-15, in the worst school shooting in U.S. history. Like in North Hollywood, the AR-15 was capable of shooting 45 rounds per minute and was similar to weapons used at Columbine, Virginia Tech, Tucson, Aurora, and in other cities throughout the United States. Such weapons and their large capacity magazines are designed for one purpose only - to shoot and kill many people as quickly as possible.

While high-capacity magazines are not the cause of gun violence, they do make such tragic cases far more deadly. In light of this fact, a well-regulated city with concern for the safety of its communities should consider controlling the sale and possession of high-capacity magazines. California Penal Code § 12020(a) (2) (b) prohibits any person from "...manufacturing, importing into the state, keeping for sale, offering or exposing for sale, giving, or lending any high-capacity magazine." The state law, however, does not prohibit the possession of these magazines. This gap in the law threatens public safety, because on the streets of Los Angeles, high-capacity magazines pose a daily threat to our citizens and police officers.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council REQUEST a report from the City Attorney, the Chief Legislative Analyst and the Police Department on the feasibility, effectiveness and benefits of an ordinance to prohibit the possession of high-capacity ammunition magazines within the City of Los Angeles. The report should consider issues of pre-emption by, and compatibility with, current and proposed state and federal law, as well as a consideration by the Police Department as to whether the policy would improve and increase public safety.

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