

## Philly mayor backs ammo magazine ban

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By MATT MOORE March 28, 2011

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The mayor and police chief said Monday they're joining their counterparts in other cities across the country in a call for Congress to reinstate a ban on high-capacity ammunition magazines like those used in a series of mass shootings, most recently the Arizona rampage that wounded U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords and killed six people earlier this year.

The announcement of support by police Chief Charles H. Ramsey and Mayor Michael Nutter comes two days ahead of the 30th anniversary of the attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan, which left his press secretary, Jim Brady, gravely wounded.

Richard Aborn, president of the Citizens Crime Commission of New York City, said it's "unconscionable" that 30 years after Brady's near-fatal shooting the issue is still being debated.

"The growing momentum of support from law enforcement across the country should send a clear and unassailable message to Congress: This isn't about Republicans or Democrats, it's about protecting cops and keeping the public safe," said Aborn, a former president of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.

The federal bill was authored by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, D-N.Y., whose husband was killed and son was seriously wounded in a 1993 shooting on the Long Island Rail Road. High-capacity magazines were banned in 1994, but the law wasn't renewed and expired in 2004. So far, the bill has more than 100 co-sponsors. If it's passed, it would prohibit the sale or transfer of any magazine that holds more than 10 rounds, though possession of magazines legally purchased before the ban's start date would be permitted.

Since 2004, such magazines have been used in several mass shootings, including at Virginia Tech in 2007, when 33 people were killed, and at Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009, when 13 died.

In January, Giffords was shot in the head at a congressional event in Tucson, Ariz., and a 9-year-old girl born on Sept. 11, 2001, was among those killed. Authorities have said the suspect in that shooting was carrying extended magazines that held 30 rounds of ammunition.

Ramsey, also president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association, said there's "simply no legitimate reason not to have this ban in place."

"It protects all citizens of this country, not just law enforcement officers," he said. "This is a very reasonable step toward demonstrating that, as a nation, we are committed to public safety."

His support echoed similar stances by Los Angeles police Chief Los Angeles Charlie Beck and Minneapolis police Chief Timothy J. Dolan, among others.

Nutter, a Democrat, said that the magazines had no place "on our streets and in our communities."

"As we have witnessed through countless tragedies throughout our country," he said, "bad people will do bad things when given access to these magazines."

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, an independent, also is a supporter of the ban on high-capacity ammunition magazines.

Earlier this month, a spokesman for the National Rifle Association, Andrew Arulanandam, said that members of the public should be allowed access to such magazines to protect themselves from attacks by armed mobs.

Associated Press writer Thomas Watkins in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

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