

Councilman Re-Arming For Assault Weapon Bill

By Craig McGuire
Taking aim at manufacturers of high-powered firearms, City Councilman Ken Fisher is reloading gun con-

trol legislation originally introduced in September, 1993.

At the 84th Precinct's January community council

meeting, Fisher outlined the bill he authored which could penalize manufacturers of semi-automatic and assault weapons up to \$100,000 for each illegal gun seized in New York City.

"Everywhere I go, I intend to discuss this legislation," remarked Fisher, explaining that the bill will be re-introduced into the Council in mid-February.

"I am not aware of any formidable opposition within the Council," said Fisher, who added that several fellow Democrats have signed on as co-sponsors.

Once the bill is re-introduced, Fisher said the Public Safety Committee will hold public hearings in late February or early March.

With 1991's Local Law 78, New York City banned the possession and sale of many of these weapons, but criminals can still purchase them in other states and illegally bring them into New York.

"This bill is not specifically aimed at any particular state or manufacturer, but it does address states, like Virginia, that are part of a conduit network of states with liberal gun control laws," said Fisher.

The proposed bill is not a ban on the sale or possession of any gun, and does

not increase licensing requirements or restrictions.

Penalties would be recoverable in a civil action brought on behalf of the city by the Corporation Counsel, the city's legal arm.

A memorandum of support attached to the legislation describes it as "a modest effort to bring the market for high-powered firearms in New York City under control."

Fisher said, "One of the frustrations with being a municipal official is legislation in this area has to be passed either in Albany or Washington, but this is something we can do on the municipal level."

In 1992, guns were used in more than 1,500 homicides, more than 7,000 assaults, and more than 30,000 robberies in New York City.

The financial burdens borne by the city, including enforcement and treatment, would be partially offset by litigation resulting from this legislation.

"The real economic benefits will be realized by driving these weapons off the streets and reducing the violent climate driving many people away from New York City," said Fisher, a Brooklyn Heights resident who represents the

33rd Council District.

Homicide is the leading cause of death for 15- to 24-year-old New Yorkers, and guns account for more than 80 percent of these deaths.

According to the councilman, this legislation will force the manufacturers who profit from the sale of assault weapons and certain semi-automatic pistols to take responsibility for the illegal use of their products.

Semi-automatic pistols meeting the criteria for this

legislation include, but are not limited to, Bushmaster Firearms Company auto pistol; Calico Model M950 pistol; Federal Engineering Corporation XP 450 and XP 900; Holmes Firearms MP-83 and MP-22 assault pistols; Intratec Ted-9 and Auto Tec-9M Scorpion assault pistols; Israeli Military Industries UZI pistols; Iver Johnson Enforcer Model 3000 Auto; Ingram or S.W.D. MAC 10 and MAC 11; and Spectre Double Action auto pistol.

Help For Abuse Victims

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ing calls from a former abuser. A one-way ticket and other relocation charges can be picked up for abuse victims who qualify, Boris noted.

There are also referrals to shelters for battered women, as well as long-term counseling available.

In addition, Victim Services, the country's largest victim assistance organization, which also runs programs in schools and the courts, offers a 24-hour hotline where victims can reach out to counselors. The number is (212) 577-7777.

Said Boris, "If you know someone who is be-

ing abused, or you're being abused, call us."

The main number for Victim Services is (212) 577-7700, while the 78th Precinct's Gottlieb can be reached at 636-6455. Domestic abuse victims in the 68th Precinct can call 439-4225 or -4216; in the 72nd Precinct, 965-6363; in the 75th Precinct, 827-3502; and in the 81st Precinct, 574-0407 or -0591.

There is also a community office at 6013 5th Avenue in Brooklyn (439-1010).

Gottlieb suggested victims may also reach the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project hotline at (212) 807-0197.

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