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Age 21 Act

What the problem is:

Gun violence continues to devastate communities across the United States, claiming over 46,000 lives in 2023, the third-highest number of gun-related deaths in our nation's history. A large number of these tragic deaths occur in mass shootings involving assault weapons. These firearms, originally designed for military use, are engineered to maximize damage in the shortest amount of time, making them a weapon of choice for mass shooters.

The deadly impact of assault weapons is tragically clear in some of the darkest moments in recent history:

- In 2022, an 18-year-old gunman in Uvalde, Texas, used an AR-15-style rifle to kill 19 children and two teachers at Robb Elementary School, while injuring 17 others.
- In 2018, a 19-year-old gunman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, murdered 17 students and staff members and injured 17 others with an AR-15 rifle.
- In 2012, a 20-year-old gunman armed with an AR-15-style rifle killed 20 children and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, the deadliest elementary school shooting in U.S. history.

These are not isolated incidents but part of a devastating pattern. Data shows that more than 85% of deaths in public mass shootings involving four or more fatalities were caused by assault rifles. These weapons significantly amplify the scale of violence and loss of life.

What the bill would do:

The *Age 21 Act* would prohibit the sale of assault weapons, handguns, large-capacity ammunition feeding devices, and related ammunition to individuals under the age of 21. This restriction would apply to both federally licensed and private sellers. Additionally, it would bar individuals under 21 from possessing these items, with limited exceptions for specific circumstances, such as service in law enforcement or the armed forces.

This legislation addresses a critical public safety issue by restricting access to firearms that have been repeatedly used in mass violence. By raising the minimum age for purchasing and possessing these weapons, the *Age 21 Act* takes a meaningful step toward reducing gun violence and protecting our communities.