

Ban on high-capacity magazines will remain after WA Supreme Court Commissioner's ruling

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A ban on sales of high-capacity magazines will stay in place after a Washington State Supreme Court Commissioner's ruling Thursday. *California Highway Patrol*

A ban on the sale of high-capacity magazines in Washington state will stay in place after a Washington State Supreme Court Commissioner's ruling Thursday.

The decision by Commissioner Michael E. Johnston comes after a lower court's ruling April 8 that the ban on the sale of high-capacity magazines in the state [is unconstitutional](#). That ruling was made by Cowlitz County Superior Court Judge Gary Bashor, in a lawsuit between Washington state and Gators Customs Guns, a firearms dealer in Kelso.

A stay to prevent the sale of high-capacity magazines while Bashor's ruling is appealed was filed by the state Attorney General's Office soon after and was approved the same day by Johnston.

High-capacity magazines have more than 10 rounds.

"As for Gator's Guns' concerns about the effect a stay will have on lawful firearm owners, I truly understand that, and I sympathize with those firearm owners generally,"

Johnston wrote Thursday. “But they can buy as many 10-round magazines as they can load into their cars or trucks while this appeal plays out.”

Johnston further explained in the order that his reasoning for approving the stay came from the concern that a “flood” of high-capacity magazines would circulate throughout the state “with potential effects on public safety,” similar to what happened in California when a similar ban was overturned by a lower court.

He also noted that the day Judge Bashor overturned the state’s statute on the magazine ban, “firearms owners were urged by way of social media and a [YouTube channel](#) to buy (high-capacity magazines) immediately after the superior court issued its injunction.”

It turned out, he said, that Gators Custom Guns and other retailers had “sizeable” stock of the banned magazines and sold it to those who flocked to the stores.

The Attorney General’s Office initially [filed the lawsuit in September](#) against Gators Custom Guns after the retailer continued to sell magazines that were [banned by the state Legislature in 2022](#).

Johnston [heard arguments for, and against, the stay on April 18](#).



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Shauna Sowersby was a freelancer for several local and national publications before joining McClatchy’s northwest newspapers covering the Legislature.