Dispelling Media Myths on AR-15 Rifles (From NSSF)

Myth - AR stands for “Assault Weapon” or “Assault Rifle”: AR stands for Armalite Rifle (the company that invented them) not assault rifle.

Origin of the term assault weapon: The term assault rifle was first used by anti-gun people in the California legislature in the 80’s to ban them.

Myth - AR’s are machineguns - AR-15-style rifles are NOT “assault weapons” or “assault rifles.” An assault rifle is fully automatic—a machine gun. Automatic firearms have been severely restricted from civilian ownership since 1934.

Negative connotations: People who use the term “assault rifle” are either unaware of its origin or are anti-gunners.

Myth - Bans only affect AR – 15: Remember, that if AR-15-style modern sporting rifles are banned, your favorite traditional-looking hunting or target shooting semi-automatic firearm could be banned, too.

Myth – AR’s are fully automatic “Weapons of War”: AR-15-style rifles look like military rifles, such as the M-16, but function like other semi-automatic civilian sporting firearms, firing only one round with each pull of the trigger.

Myth – AR’s are not for hunting or have no legitimate use in society: These rifles are used for many different types of hunting, from varmint to big game. And they’re used for target shooting in the national matches. In fact, the Colt AR-15 and Springfield M1A, both labeled “assault weapons,” are the rifles most often used for marksmanship competitions in the United States. And their cartridges are standard hunting calibers, useful for game up to and including deer.

Myth – AR-15’s have more powerful cartridges: AR-15-style rifles are no more powerful than other hunting rifles of the same caliber (223 Remington) and in most cases are chambered in calibers less powerful than common big-game hunting cartridges like the 30-06 Springfield and .300 Win. Mag.

AR-15 Popularity (From the NSSF)

AR-15-platform rifles are among the most popular firearms being sold. They are today’s modern sporting rifle.
The term “Modern Sporting rifle” is the industry nomenclature for this popular and versatile firearm.

8.9 million Americans went target shooting with AR-style rifles in 2009 and that participants using this type of rifle were the most active among all types of sport shooters.

More people shot with modern sporting rifles, and more often, than with shotguns in the established sports of skeet, trap and sporting clays.

In 2009 34.4 million Americans target shot (15% of US population), an all-time high.

**Why Own an AR -15** (From NSSF)

- **Tradition:** Since the 19th century, civilian sporting rifles have evolved from their military predecessors. The modern sporting rifle (AR-15) simply follows that tradition. Nearly half (44%) of MSR owners are current or former military/law enforcement.

- **Home and personal defense.** People own them for the very same reasons police officers use them. They are extremely effective at home and personal defense.

- **Competition:** ... they’re used for target shooting in the national matches. In fact, the Colt AR-15 and Springfield M1A, both labeled “assault weapons,” are the rifles most often used for marksmanship competitions in the United States.

- **Multiple use:** These rifles’ accuracy, reliability, ruggedness and versatility serve target shooters and hunters well. They are true all-weather firearms.

- AR’s are a high-tech, cutting-edge product -- rugged, accurate, versatile, fun to shoot and easily accessorized.

- **Enjoyment:** And, they are a lot of fun to shoot!

**General Firearm Information** (From the NSSF)

In fact, in 2012 the firearms and ammunition industry was responsible for as much as $31.84 billion in total economic activity in the country.

Companies in the United States that manufacture, distribute and sell firearms, ammunition and hunting equipment employ as many as 98,752 people in the country and generate an additional 110,998 jobs in supplier and ancillary industries. These
1: Percent of fatal firearm accidents involving children, the lowest cause listed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

300 million: Estimate of how many firearms are in the United States

85 million: Estimate of the number of firearms owners in the United States.