

Plan to Ease Ammunition Curb Appears to Be Doomed in Senate

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30 — Opponents of gun control legislation appear to have failed in an effort to push through Congress, in the last days before adjournment, a bill that would permit a person to buy .22-caliber rimfire ammunition without having his name recorded.

This kind of ammunition is used in most inexpensive handguns as well as in .22-caliber rifles.

The bill was passed by the House last week and was quietly approved by the Senate Finance Committee last night, even though hearings have never been held on it.

But Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, the majority leader, said in an interview today that it was highly unlikely the bill would be called up for Senate debate and even more unlikely that it would come to a vote. As majority leader, Senator Mansfield controls which bills are brought to the floor.

A number of bills, many of them minor but a few significant ones, are usually slipped through Congress in the last days of a session. This year, however, few such attempts have been made because of the many filibusters that have tied up the Senate in the final days.

The ammunition bill would repeal a provision of the 1968 gun control law that requires dealers to keep a record of the names, ages and addresses of all persons who buy .22-caliber bullets from them.

The theory behind the provision is that it enables the police to check on who is buying such ammunition.

According to Senator Thomas J. Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, 30 per cent of the people murdered with pistols in 1968 were killed by .22-caliber bullets.

The requirement that purchases be recorded is strongly opposed by sportsmen's organizations and by ammunition dealers.