

Orange County's congressional delegation, like much of Congress, divided itself along partisan lines in response to President Barack Obama's call Wednesday for a fresh round of gun-control legislation and for related efforts via executive order.

Republicans were wary of key elements of the proposals while Democrats eagerly applauded the president's initiative.

"Americans are tired of all the talk following these senseless tragedies," said Rep. Loretta Sanchez, D-Santa Ana, who has long supported legislation like that proposed by Obama. "They want to see our government take a reasonable approach to gun control in the places we find common ground."

While there could be Republican support for Obama's proposed universal background checks, GOP opposition to renewing the expired ban on assault weapons and high-capacity bullet magazines make it unlikely those measures would be approved by the House of Representatives.

Reviews of Obama's planned executive orders – which include inter-agency sharing of information and new research on gun violence – also received a cool reception from Republicans.

"The president's proposals are either duplicative, thus unnecessary, or they focus the government's authority and power on controlling honest citizens rather than making it more likely to disarm criminals," said Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Costa Mesa. "Background checks have value but care needs to be taken that they do not violate the rights of law-abiding citizens."

Rohrabacher opposes a ban on assault weapons. As for high-capacity magazines, Rohrabacher questions whether a ban would have the desired effect.

"We should engage in an evidence-based inquiry on the actual impact of these proposals on

mass killings and incidence of crime because thus far, the evidence is to the contrary," said Rohrabacher spokeswoman Tara Olivia Setmayer. "As a matter of fact, according to the Uniformed Crime Report, murders, assaults, et cetera, went down after the assault weapons ban expired."

Sanchez said that reservations over the legislative proposals extended beyond the GOP to include some Democratic representatives.

"On the Democratic side, I think there will be some who will vote against passing an assault-weapons ban, who would probably vote against large magazines of bullets," Sanchez told MSNBC on Tuesday, saying opposition was likely from some Democrats in rural areas in the South and Midwest. Many voters in those regions oppose additional gun control.

Opposition won't be the case with Orange County's three Democrats – Sanchez; Rep. Linda Sanchez, D-Lakewood; and Rep. Alan Lowenthal, D-Long Beach.

"Recent events in Newtown, Aurora, and Tucson demonstrate that more must be done to protect the American people from such horrific acts of violence and I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass common-sense changes to the way we license guns and restrict access to certain weapons that do not have legitimate sporting or self-defense uses," Lowenthal said.

Linda Sanchez, unlike her sister, Loretta, expressed optimism that the assault-weapon ban could pass.

"I'm hopeful that it could, because the American people support reasonable gun violence prevention," she said.

The three Democrats all received a 0 percent score on the National Rifle Association's 2012 report card. The county's four Republicans all received high scores from the NRA – as well as the group's endorsement.

Rep. John Campbell, R-Irvine, does not expect to support any of Obama's proposals, according to his office. He received an 83 percent from the NRA.

Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Vista, was the only county representative to receive 100 percent from the NRA, although he was circumspect in his response to Obama's proposals.

"After investigating the botched ATF 'Fast and Furious' gun-walking operation for two years, I certainly have concerns about insufficient Justice Department efforts to enforce existing laws that result in dangerous criminals having continued access to firearms," said Issa, chairman of the Oversight Committee that investigated the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. "I intend to carefully examine President Obama's proposals and look forward to getting more details."

Rep. Ed Royce, R-Fullerton, received a 92 percent score from the NRA. But a statement issued by his office Wednesday did not explicitly indicate opposition or support for Obama's proposals.

"Ed supports the Second Amendment for law-abiding citizens," reads the statement. "He also has supported common sense proposals to promote gun safety, including requiring instant background checks and the use of safety devices for guns. ♦ In addition, he supported a law to strengthen the instant background check system, by providing states with financial incentives to report records of mental illness (and other red-flag cases) to the FBI."