



September 9, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
State Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 264 (Min) – REQUEST FOR VETO

Dear Governor Newsom:

The undersigned non-profit wildlife conservation organizations strongly urge your veto of SB 264 – legislation which would prohibit an officer, employee, operator, lessee, or licensee of the 32nd District Agricultural Association from contracting for, authorizing, or allowing the sale of any firearm, firearm part, or ammunition on the property or in the buildings that comprise the Orange County (OC) Fair and Event Center.

Proponents of this legislation wrongly believe that there are “gun show loopholes” which allow firearms and ammunition to be freely traded to those attending gun shows without any background check or ten-day waiting period. In fact, SB 264 even states: *“Gun shows bring grave danger to a community, and the following dangerous incidents, among others, have occurred at gun shows, including, but not limited to, an official vendor accused of trafficking illegal firearms, sales of firearms to individuals registered in the Department of Justice Bureau of Firearms Armed Prohibited Persons System, and illegal importation of large-capacity magazines.”*

Yet, promoters and operators of gun shows in Orange County and throughout California must comply with multiple sections of the Penal Code. In addition, the same extensive set of existing laws that apply to retail firearm and ammunition sales throughout California also apply to vendors at gun shows. Further, vendors that participate in gun shows must submit all their licenses to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) for review prior to the event to ensure they possess the appropriate valid licenses and comply with all relevant laws. If they do not pass the review of the DOJ, they are prohibited from participating.

Proponents also suggest that firearms and ammunition at gun shows are just laid out for anyone to walk by and grab. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Gun show promoters go above and beyond current state law to ensure that no illegal transactions or violent incidences occur at their shows. For example, just some of the additional safety steps promoters take include: 1) retaining the services of retired California DOJ Bureau of Firearms Enforcement Officers to actively monitor activities at the show; 2) contacting all vendors prior to the show to ensure everyone is compliant with state laws; 3)

actively surveilling the show to ensure all merchandise sold at the show is legal and compliant; 4) requiring that anyone bringing in a personal firearm for the purpose of repair or appraisal, has the firearm fully inspected and tagged before entering the show; 5) barring the possession of both ammunition and a firearm together at a show, except for vendors who sell both; 6) informing all attendees that any transfer of a firearm must go through a licensed dealer per all applicable laws and that a full background check and waiting period will apply to all such transactions; 7) enforcing all laws regarding ammunition sales – including that only licensed ammunition dealers may sell ammunition and that all ammunition must be kept behind a barrier and out of the reach of the public; 8) requiring that all employees of ammunition vendors have had a background check and are in possession of a valid Certificate of Eligibility issued by the DOJ; and 9) ensuring the presence of maximum law enforcement, and taking far greater security measures than required by law and taken by typical firearm retailers to ensure lawful activity and safety at the show.

In addition, contrary to what the bill's proponents would like one to believe, gun shows are very much a family affair. Attendees of gun shows are parents, grandparents, competitors, trainers, law enforcement, and other professionals. Many gun shows also include training and education seminars, guest speakers, lifestyle vendors, safety training, and more. The people that attend gun shows are the law-abiding citizens that visit largely for the educational value and to stay up on new products that are available – no different than any other industry trade show that occurs across our state.

Finally, it is worth noting that three similar gun show ban bills have been recently vetoed – two by Governor Brown and one by Governor Schwarzenegger. Please also note that, as originally proposed, SB 264 would have banned the sale of firearms and ammunition at all state and local properties, revealing that the ultimate intent is to ban these events statewide on public property. Should SB 264 become signed into law, it will only encourage future legislative efforts towards that larger goal.

The undersigned organizations strongly support making California a safer place by keeping guns out of the hands of criminals. But a prohibition on the sale of firearms, firearm parts, or ammunition at the OC Fair and Event Center would not accomplish that goal. Rather, SB 264 would only unfairly impact law-abiding individuals and families who enjoy hunting and/or shooting sports. For all the foregoing reasons we respectfully request you to veto SB 264.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Jacobs, President
California Houndsmen for Conservation

James Stone, President
Nor-Cal Guides & Sportsmen's Association

Dan Whisenhunt, Chief Executive Officer
California Deer Association

Mark Hennelly, Vice President of Legislative Affairs
California Waterfowl Association

Steve Miller, President
Tulare Basin Wetlands Association

Gary F. Brennan, President
San Diego County Wildlife Federation

Corey Thompson, President
Cal-Ore Wetland and Waterfowl Council

Chriss Bowles, President
California Bowmen Hunters/State Archery Association

Fred Harpster, President
Black Brant Group

Cathie Nelson, President
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter - Safari Club International