

August 7th, 2020

Honorable Senator Anthony J. Portantino
Chair Senate Committee on Appropriations
State Capitol Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

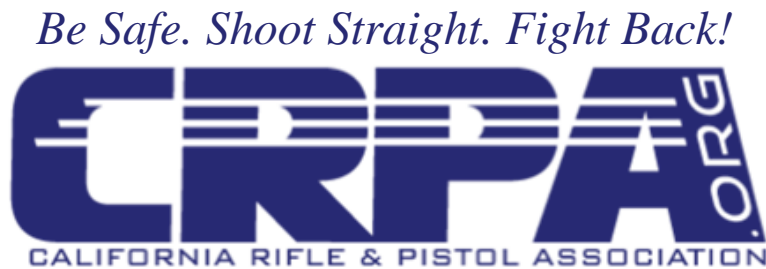
RE: Assembly Bill 2847: Chiu: AB 2847 Firearms: unsafe handguns.
Position: OPPOSITION

Dear Senator Portantino,

On behalf of the California Rifle & Pistol Association Inc. (CRPA), its members and supporters throughout California, I write to express our strong opposition of Assembly Bill 2847 (AB 2847). CRPA, founded in 1875, works tirelessly to defend the civil and constitutional rights of individuals who choose to responsibly own and use firearms. CRPA promotes the recreational shooting sports, and provides safety, education, and skills training to enable all persons a more enjoyable and safe recreational experience.

AB 2847 will revise the criteria for unsafe handguns by requiring the microstamp to be imprinted in one place on the interior of the handgun, and would require the California Department of Justice (DOJ), for every new firearm added to the roster, to remove, three (3) firearms from the roster that are not compliant with current microstamp requirements. Currently the DOJ maintains a roster of handguns certified for sale in the state. Handguns not listed on the roster cannot be purchased from a licensed dealer. For placement on the roster, handguns must be submitted to the DOJ for testing and satisfy certain statutorily requirements. Currently less than 800 guns are on this list, a decrease from a high of approximately 1,400.

In 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger signed AB 1471 (Feuer) that requires new semi-automatic pistols be equipped with microstamping technology. The legislation further provided this requirement becomes effective when the DOJ “certifies that the technology used to create the microstamp imprint is available to more than one manufacturer unencumbered by any patent restrictions”. This certification did not happen until 2013. This microstamping technology is a microscopic array of characters that identify the make, model, and serial number of the pistol, and the current California law requires it be imprinted in two or more places on the interior surface or internal working parts of the pistol, and that are transferred by imprinting on each cartridge case when the firearm is fired.



Since DOJ's certification in 2013, no manufacturer has attempted to implement the technology due to basic, yet dramatic inconsistencies that defeat microstamping's intended purpose. Forensic science confirms that marks left by the internal components of a gun are altered after normal use which can render the microstamp unreliable. Not to mention, a criminal with a file could easily defeat the stamp itself. Equally important to consider is even if the technology were viable, the price of production would significantly increase the cost of firearms to consumers. The guarantee that the correct parts, i.e. firing pins and slides, exactly match the serial numbered handgun frame during the manufacturing process is the primary concern rather than the cost of applying microstamping technology.

As for the authors intent to remove three (3) firearms from the roster that are not compliant with current microstamp requirements for every new firearm added to the roster was just not thought out.

"The Department of Justice shall, for each semiautomatic pistol newly added to the roster pursuant to Section 32015, remove from the roster exactly three semiautomatic pistols..."

The Attorney General shall remove semiautomatic pistols from the roster pursuant to this subdivision in reverse order of their dates of addition to the roster, beginning with the semiautomatic pistol added to the roster on the earliest date and continuing until each semiautomatic pistol on the roster includes each of the applicable features described in those paragraphs."

This aspect of AB 2847 will further compound the situation by removing three time tested and desired firearms from the roster by "earliest date" which does not at all take into account quality or intended application of the firearm. This will only further reduce the availability of affordable, reliable handguns. The microstamping requirement alone chills market forces and limits the pool of technologically superior firearms to Californians. This removal of firearms further devastates a free marketplace where quality products rise to the top and inferior overpriced products fail.

The safety of Californians is at the very foundation of our organization. It has been our consistent goal to work toward common sense solutions regarding the issue of crime and firearm ownership. This can be done, however, without sacrificing our Constitutional rights and the ability of the law abiding to protect their families, to operate a lawful business, provide firearms for safe at a price all Californians can afford to protect their families and recreate. For the foregoing reasons the California Rifle & Pistol Association Inc. stands in opposition to AB 2847 and urges you to vote no on this bad legislation!

Respectfully Submitted,
Roy M. Griffith Jr.
Legislative Director
California Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc.
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