

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

WHAT'S BEHIND THE COVID CURTAIN? OR, "YOU'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE!"

What a legislative session this has been so far! The Democrats

have done their best to squeeze everything they can behind the COVID curtain, stooping to lows that have even surprised folks with 40 years of experience in the building. They have used their time-tested dirty politics like "Gut and Amends" and hiding significant firearms law changes in a budget bill. Sadly, until "We the People" change things, "they" have a super majority and will break and override any "rules" they choose to accomplish their objectives.

For this article I am going to focus on what I think are some of the worst active bills we are currently facing and then touch on the year's biggest violation of procedures this session.

I can sum up the bills we are facing as "Repeats," "Gut and Amends," and "Who cares about process, put a COVID bow on it, and it will get through!"



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REPEATS AND REJECTS

What is that saying about "no such thing as an original idea?" Our first bill is an example of exactly that by our friends in the big white building! Assembly Bill (AB) 2362, "Firearms dealers: conduct of business," by Assembly Member Muratsuchi is the third attempt in 3 years aimed at putting our small "mom and pop" firearms dealers out of business!

We beat this bill in the 2019 session as AB 1064 and 2017 session as AB 736. Commencing July 1, 2022, AB 2362 would authorize the California Department of Justice (CA DOJ) to impose a civil fine on licensed firearm dealers not exceeding \$1,000 for paperwork violations and a civil fine not exceeding \$3,000 for a violation when the licensee had received written notification from the CA DOJ regarding the violation and fails to take corrective action, or the CA DOJ determines the licensee committed the violation knowingly or with gross negligence. Really? In these times where small businesses are struggling to stay alive in California, let's slap a \$3,000 fine on them for paperwork violations! According to many FFLs I talk to, these violations are often paperwork violations that result from not being able to

get anyone at the CA DOJ to return their calls and answer their questions!

Certainly one of the potentially ugliest bills we now face this session came to be via their dirty little "Gut and Amend" procedure. AB 2847, "Firearms: unsafe handguns," by Assembly Members Chiu and Gabriel, started this session as a harmless (at least in our world) forensic evidence collection legislation. However, it was completely stripped and amended to yet another assault on California gun owners' rights to purchase firearms available everywhere else in the nation! We all call this the "Three for One Bill!"

AB 2847 will revise the criteria for unsafe handguns by requiring the micro-stamp to be imprinted in one place on the interior of the handgun and for every new firearm added to the roster, requiring the CA DOJ to remove, three firearms from the roster that are not compliant with current microstamp requirements. Currently, the CA DOJ maintains a roster of handguns certified for sale in the state. Handguns not listed on the roster cannot be purchased from a licensed California dealer. For placement on the roster, handguns must be submitted to the CA DOJ for testing and satisfy certain statutory requirements. Currently, less than

800 guns are on this list, a decrease from a high of approximately 1,400. If that does not sound bad enough to you, get this: it is NOT a “like for like” removal of firearms. If a manufacturer brings a microstamped gun to market in California, for instance, a 9mm, this does NOT mean a “like” non-microstamped 9mm will be removed from the list of firearms you can purchase in California. No, instead “they” go to the list and remove the three “oldest” certified firearms on the list. This is very much like saying, “Yes, Mr. Smith, appreciate you purchasing and driving a Ford F250 for the last 20 years, and it’s the vehicle that fits your choice and needs, but now it’s not an option. Here is a Ford Prius!” REALLY!

SB 1175, “Animals: prohibitions on importation and possession of wild animals: live animal markets,” by Senator Stern is a repeat with a COVID bow on it! We beat the bill as SB 1487 in the 2018 session with a veto from Governor Brown. This bill is unlawful and fully covered by federal law! But that is not enough for Senator Stern who openly testifies he is personally against hunting. He brought the identical bill back for the 2020 session. Then along came COVID-19 and fingers of blame were pointed at wet markets. To be more politically correct, then blaming the Chinese government, Senator Stern amends AB 1175 to require the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to immediately suspend any authorization to import a wild animal species into the state when the evidence suggests zoonotic transmission from this species, or a closely related species, could be responsible for a novel, readily transmissible human disease in order to protect the public health. Does this sound like a smoke screen? Because it is! The bill would also authorize CDFW to take additional measures pursuant to its authority related to wild animal species necessary to protect the public health. The bill would require the CDFW, as applicable, to revise the list of animals that may not be

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imported or transported into this state that CDFW is required to publish from time to time as changes arise. All this and the bill still bans bringing wildlife harvested in African nations in compliance with their laws and science and our federal law being brought into California!

I for one would rather see California Game Wardens protecting our precious native CALIFORNIA wildlife, the water and habitat they need in order to thrive, rather than exotic frogs, turtles and game animals lawfully harvested in other nations! These and other ugly bills have been flying their way through the process for the most part on party line votes in committee and on the floor. Representatives are taking full advantage of the COVID curtain, and our access to the process has been greatly restricted. We are lucky if we can get in 1 minute of testimony, if at all!

In my opening, I promised to share the bill I feel is the best (*worst*) example of California’s elected officials’ absolute disregard for our legislative process. Neatly tucked away in a budget bill is AB 88. AB 88, a “budget bill,” was amended to

include three significant attacks on your Second Amendment rights:

- (1) Redefine “assault weapons” to ban Franklin Armory Title 1™ (before it’s even delivered in CA).
- (2) Advance implementation of “Precursor Parts” law from 2025 to 2022.
- (3) Ban joint registration of firearms.

The reason this is so troubling is these are changes in law and as such should be introduced in a policy bill with full public disclosure and review. However, the CA DOJ is claiming this is an emergency! An “emergency” to ban a particular firearm that would be legal by California law today. A firearm that has not been delivered yet in California and therefore certainly never been used in a crime or to violate any law! How is that an emergency that merits circumventing procedure?

SOME GOOD NEWS

You know, I never like to be all doom and gloom. There is some good news to share! Through a collaborative effort, at least for this legislative session, we have laid to rest some very bad legislation: AB 3071 would have banned the use of any lead ammunition on all California ranges; SB 1041 would have banned the use of dogs to hunt deer, even the recovery of downed deer; and AB 3058 (yes, another “do-over” bill—AB 688 from last session) is the returned attempt to basically require you to have a gun safe bolted to the frame of your vehicle to transport long guns in! All big victories in my opinion, and we are not done fighting!

Now more than ever it is critical you get out and vote! Get everyone you know to get out and vote! The only way we are going to change anything in our incredible state is changing who occupies the seats in the big white building! Thank you for your continued support! Together we can and will make a difference!

For a complete list of our 2020 session opposition legislation refer to our website. **CRPA**