

Date of Hearing: March 26, 2019  
Counsel: Matthew Fleming

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr., Chair

AB 893 (Gloria) – As Introduced February 20, 2019

**SUMMARY:** Prohibits, as of January 1, 2021, the sale of firearms and ammunitions at the Del Mar Fairgrounds in the County of San Diego and the City of Del Mar and thereby creates a misdemeanor offense for a violation of that prohibition. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Prohibits any officer, employee, operator, or lessee of the 22nd District Agricultural Association, as defined, from authorizing, or allowing the sale of any firearm or ammunition on the property or in the buildings that comprise the Del Mar Fairgrounds in the County of San Diego and the City of Del Mar or any successor or additional property owned, leased, or otherwise occupied or operated by the district.
- 2) Provides that the term “ammunition” includes assembled ammunition for use in a firearm and components of ammunition, including smokeless and black powder, and any projectile capable of being fired from a firearm with deadly consequence.
- 3) Provides that the prohibition on firearms and ammunitions sales at the Del Mar Fairgrounds does not apply to gun buy-back events held by a law enforcement agency.
- 4) States that this section will become operative on January 1, 2021.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Divides the state in agricultural districts and designates District 22 as San Diego County. (Food and Agr., §§ 3851, 3873.)
- 2) Allows for the establishment of District Agricultural Associations within each agricultural district, for the purposes of holding fairs, expositions and exhibitions, and constructing, maintaining, and operating recreational and cultural facilities of general public interest. (Food & Agr. Code, § 3951.)
- 3) Provides that bringing or possessing a firearm within any state or local public building is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for not more than one year, or in the state prison, unless a person brings any weapon that may be lawfully transferred into a gun show for the purpose of sale or trade. (Pen. Code §§ 171b subd. (a), 171b subd. (b)(7)(A).)
- 4) Prohibits the sale, lease, or transfer of firearms without a license, unless the sale, lease, or transfer is pursuant to operation of law or a court order, made by a person who obtains the firearm by intestate succession or bequest, or is an infrequent sale, transfer, or transfer, as defined. (Pen. Code § 26500, 26505, 26520.)

- 5) Excludes persons with a valid federal firearms license and a current certificate of eligibility issued by the Department of Justice from the prohibitions on the sale, lease, or transfer of used firearms, other than handguns, at gun shows or events. (Pen. Code § 26525.)
- 6) Permits licensed dealers to sell firearms only from their licensed premises and at gun shows. (Pen. Code § 26805.)
- 7) States that a dealer operating at a gun show must comply with all applicable laws, including California's waiting period law, laws governing the transfer of firearms by dealers, and all local ordinances, regulations, and fees. (Pen. Code § 26805.)
- 8) States that no person shall produce, promote, sponsor, operate, or otherwise organize a gun show, unless that person possesses a valid certificate of eligibility from the Department of Justice. (Pen. Code § 27200.)
- 9) Specifies the requirements that gun show operators must comply with at gun shows, including entering into a written contract with each gun show vendor selling firearms at the show, ensuring that liability insurance is in effect for the duration of a gun show, posting visible signs pertaining to gun show laws at the entrances of the event, and submitting a list of all prospective vendors and designated firearms transfer agents who are licensed firearms dealers to the Department of Justice, as specified. (Pen. Code §§ 27200, 27245.)
- 10) Specifies that unless a different penalty is expressly provided, a violation of any provision of the Food and Agricultural code is a misdemeanor. (Food and Agr. Code, § 9.)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Author's Statement:** According to the author, "There is an ever apparent link between the gun violence we see virtually every week and the number of guns in our communities. Additionally, the State of California should not be profiting or benefitting from the sale of firearms. This bill demonstrates that we value people over guns and public safety above all  
  
"Fundamentally, I believe it is wrong for the State of California to profit or to benefit from the sale of firearms and ammunition. I acknowledge that gun ownership is a Constitutional right in the United States, and I know that there are plenty of responsible gun owners out there. However, the fact remains that widespread accessibility to these deadly weapons produces a public safety threat that we must address."
- 2) **Gun Shows:** A "gun show" is a trade show for firearms. At gun shows, individuals may buy, sell, and trade firearms and firearms-related accessories. These events typically attract several thousand people, and a single gun show can have sales of over 1,000 firearms over the course of one weekend. (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), *Gun Shows: Brady Checks and Crime Gun Traces*, January 1999, available at: <https://www.atf.gov/file/57506/download>, [as of March 18, 2019].)

According to the NRA's Institute for Legislative Action (NRA-ILA), less than one percent of inmates incarcerated in state prisons for gun crimes acquired their firearms at a gun show.

(NRA-ILA, <https://www.nra.org/get-the-facts/background-checks-nics>.) However, according to a report published by UC Davis, gun shows have been identified as a source for illegally trafficked firearms. (<https://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/vprp/pdf/IGS/IGS1web.pdf>, [as of March 20, 2019].) Though violent criminals do not appear to regularly purchase their guns directly from gun shows, gun shows have received criticism as being “the critical moment in the chain of custody for many guns, the point at which they move from the somewhat-regulated legal market to the shadowy, no-questions-asked illegal market.” (Gerney, *The Gun Debate 1 Year After Newtown*, Center for American Progress, December 13, 2013, available at: <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/guns-crime/report/2013/12/13/80795/the-gun-debate-1-year-after-newtown/>, [as of March 18, 2019].)

A report by the Government Accountability Office regarding gun trafficking to Mexico confirmed that many traffickers buy guns at gun shows. (<https://www.gao.gov/assets/680/674570.pdf>, [as of March 15].) 87 percent of firearms seized by Mexican authorities and traced in the last 5 years originated in the United States, according to data from Department of Justice’s Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. According to United States and Mexican government officials, these firearms have been increasingly more powerful and lethal in recent years. Many of these firearms come from gun shops and gun shows in south-west border states. (<https://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/vprp/pdf/IGS/IGS1web.pdf>, [as of March 15].)

- 3) **Gun Show Regulations in California:** In 1999, California enacted the nation’s broadest legislation to increase oversight at gun shows. AB 295 (Corbett), Chapter 247, Statutes of 1999, the Gun Show Enforcement and Security Act of 2000, added a plethora of requirements for gun shows. To obtain a certificate of eligibility from the DOJ, a promoter must certify that he or she is familiar with existing law regarding gun shows; obtain at least \$1,000,000 of liability insurance; provide an annual list of gun shows the applicant plans to promote; pay an annual fee; make available to local law enforcement a complete list of all entities that have rented any space at the show; submit not later than 15 days before the start of the show an event and security plan; submit a list to DOJ of prospective vendors and designated firearms transfer agents who are licensed dealers; provide photo identification of each vendor and vendor’s employee; prepare an annual event and security plan; and require all firearms carried onto the premises of a show to be checked, cleared of ammunition, secured in a way that they cannot be operated, and have an identification tag or sticker attached. AB 295 also provided for a number of penalties for a gun show producer’s willful failure to comply with the specified requirements.

In California, gun transactions at gun shows are treated no differently than any other private party transaction. This means that such transfers must be completed through a licensed California dealer. Such a transfer requires a background check and is subject to the mandatory ten day waiting period prior to delivering the firearm to the purchaser.

California’s strict gun show regulations may help to prevent increases in firearm deaths and injuries following gun shows. (See Ellicott C. Matthay, et al., “In-State and Interstate Associations Between Gun Shows and Firearm Deaths and Injuries,” *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2017) Vol. 1 Iss. 8.)

4) **Current State of Gun Shows at the Del Mar Fairgrounds:** According to a Fairgrounds press release, last year the 22nd District Agricultural Association's Board of Directors voted 8 to 1 to not consider any contracts with producers of gun shows beyond Dec. 31, 2018, until it has adopted a more thorough policy regarding the conduct of gun shows. (Available at: [http://www.delmarfairgrounds.com/index.php?fuseaction=about.press\\_details&newsid=1396](http://www.delmarfairgrounds.com/index.php?fuseaction=about.press_details&newsid=1396) [as of March 20, 2019].) The policy is to be presented to the Board no later than December, 2019 and would:

- Consider the feasibility of conducting gun shows for only educational and safety training purposes and bans the possession of guns and ammunition on state property,
- Align gun show contract language with recent changes in state and federal law
- Detail an enhanced security plan for the conduct of future shows
- Propose a safety plan
- Consider the age appropriateness of such an event
- Grant rights for the DAA to perform an audit to ensure full compliance with California Penal Code Sections 171b and 12071.1 and 12071.4. These audit rights may be delegated at the discretion of the 22nd DAA. (*Id.*)

According to local reporting, the operator of the Del Mar Fairgrounds gun show has filed a lawsuit challenging the Board of Directors' decision on the grounds that it violates the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment guarantee to free expression. (Williams, *Lawsuit to hang up Del Mar Fairgrounds gun show policy recommendations*, Del Mar Times, March 15, 2019, available at: <https://www.delmartimes.net/news/sd-cm-nc-gun-show-20190315-htmlstory.html>, [as of March 20, 2019].)

This bill would add a section to the Food and Agricultural Code that prohibits the sale of firearms and ammunitions at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. By default, a violation of any provision of the Food and Agricultural code is a misdemeanor, unless otherwise specified. Therefore, this bill would effectively terminate the possibility for future gun shows at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

5) **Veto Messages on Previous Attempts to Ban Gun Shows in Agricultural Districts:** There have been several legislative attempts to regulate gun shows in Agricultural District 1A in San Mateo and San Francisco Counties at a location commonly known as the "Cow Palace." The Cow Palace is substantially similar to the Del Mar Fairgrounds inasmuch as it is a state-owned property located within the jurisdiction of a county. SB 221 (Wiener), of 2018, SB 475 (Leno) of 2013, SB 585 (Leno) of 2009, and others, all attempted to either ban gun shows at the Cow Palace altogether, or require prior approval from the county Board Supervisors prior to entering into a contract for holding a gun show there. All three attempts were vetoed by the Governor.

In regards to SB 221, Governor Brown stated: "This bill would prohibit the sale of firearms and ammunition at the District Agricultural Association 1A, commonly known as the Cow

Palace. This bill has been vetoed twice over the last ten years, once by myself, and once by Governor Schwarzenegger. The decision on what kind of shows occur at the Cow Palace rests with the local board of directors which, incidentally, represents a broad cross section of the community. They are in the best position to make these decisions.”

SB 475 was also vetoed by Governor Brown with the following message: “This bill requires the District Agricultural Association 1-A (Cow Palace) to obtain approval from the County of San Mateo and the City and County of San Francisco prior to entering into a contract for a gun show on state property. I encourage all District Agricultural Associations to work with their local communities when determining their operations and events. This bill, however, totally pre-empts the Board of Directors of the Cow Palace from exercising its contracting authority whenever a gun show is involved. I prefer to leave these decisions to the sound discretion of the Board.”

SB 585 was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger, who stated: “This bill would prohibit the sale of firearms and ammunition at the Cow Palace. This bill would set a confusing precedent at the state level by statutorily prohibiting one District Agricultural Association (DAA) from selling firearms and ammunition, a legal and regulated activity, while allowing other DAAs to continue to do so. In addition, this bill would result in decreased state and local tax revenues by restricting events at the Cow Palace.”

- 6) **Argument in Support:** According to the *NeverAgainCA*: “NeverAgainCA organized large, peaceful protests at every gun show at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. attended and spoke at every meeting of the 22nd District Agricultural Association Board, and joined students protesting gun violence and gun shows at many area schools. NeverAgainCA presented resolutions calling for the elimination of the gun shows at the Del Mar Fairgrounds to the City Councils of the adjacent cities of Del Mar, Solana Beach and Encinitas; these resolutions were adopted and are part of the record of this hearing. Candidate and now Congressman Mike Levin addressed several of our rallies against the gun shows. At the request of NeverAGainCA, then Lt. Governor, now Governor, Gavin Newsom, called on the Fair Board to end gun shows and put an end to valuing the sale of firearms above the value of lives.

“NeverAgainCA is proud to support AB 893. The residents of the 78th AD and adjacent districts, and their elected representatives, have demonstrated the broad public support for ending gun shows at the Del Mar Fair Grounds on a permanent basis.”

- 7) **Argument in Opposition:** According to the *California Rifle and Pistol Association, Inc.*: “Promoters and operators of gun shows in California must comply with no less than twenty-six sections of the penal code. Gun sales are highly-regulated in California and the rules are no less stringent for those vendors at gun shows (Refer Exhibit #2 attached). Vendors that participate in gun shows may not do so unless all their licenses have been submitted to the California Department of Justice before the event for the purposes of determining whether the vendors possess the proper valid licenses. If they do not pass the review of the California DOJ, they are prohibited from participating.

...

“Gun shows are very much a family event. Many of them have training and education, guest speakers, lifestyle vendors, safety training, and more. Ever hear of a shooting spree at a gun

show? No, because people that attend gun shows are the law-abiding citizens that attend for the educational value and to stay up on new products that are available. It is no different than any other trade show that occurs in other industries across the state. Criminals would never subject themselves to this much scrutiny and regulation in the hopes of getting their hands on a firearm. These types of false and scare-tactic narratives have no place in modern discourse.”

- 8) **Related Legislation:** SB 281 (Wiener), among other things, would prohibit the sale of firearms and ammunitions at the Cow Palace located in San Mateo County and San Francisco County.
- 9) **Prior Legislation:**
  - a) SB 221 (Wiener) of the 2017-18 Legislative Session, would have prohibited the sale of firearms and ammunitions at the Cow Palace located in San Mateo County and San Francisco County. SB 221 was vetoed by Governor Brown.
  - b) SB 475 (Leno), of the 2013-14 Legislative Session, would have required gun shows at the Cow Palace to have prior approval of both the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo and the City and County of San Francisco, as specified. SB 475 was vetoed by Governor Brown.
  - c) SB 585 (Leno), of the 2009-10 Legislative Session, would have prohibited events at which any firearm or ammunition is sold at the Cow Palace, as specified. SB 585 was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger.
  - d) AB 2948 (Leno), of the 2007-08 Legislative Session, would have prohibited the sale of firearms or ammunition at the Cow Palace. AB 2948 failed passage on the Senate Floor.
  - e) SB 1733 (Speier), of the 2003-04 Legislative Session, would have required gun shows at the Cow Palace to have prior approval of both the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo and the City and County of San Francisco, as specified. SB 1733 failed passage on the Assembly Floor.
  - f) AB 295 (Corbett), Chapter 247, Statutes of 1999, established the Gun Show Enforcement and Security Act of 2000, which includes a number of requirements for producers that promote gun shows.
  - g) AB 1107 (Ortiz), of the 1997-98 Legislative Session, would have authorized any city, county or agricultural association to prohibit gun sales at gun shows or events. AB 1107 failed in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

Bay Area Student Activists  
City of Del Mar  
City of Encinitas

City of Solana Beach  
NeverAgainCA

**Oppose**

B & L Productions, d.b.a. Crossroads of the West Gun Shows  
California Rifle and Pistol Association, Inc.  
California Sportsman's Lobby, Inc.  
Gun Owners of California, Inc.  
National Rifle Association - Institute For Legislative Action  
National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc.  
Outdoor Sportsmen's Coalition of California  
Safari Club International - California Chapters  
Western Fairs Association

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