

Guest column

NM House Judiciary Committee approves worse version of gun bill

By Sheriff Tony Mace
Cibola County Sheriff's Office

Late Friday evening, the New Mexico House Judiciary Committee approved Bloomberg-backed House Bill 50, sponsored by state Rep. Stephanie Garcia Richard, D-Los Alamos, along a 7-6 party line vote. Thank you to the members of the committee who opposed this intrusive, ineffective and unenforceable gun control measure: House Minority Leader Nate Gentry, R-Albuquerque, Rep. Cathrynn Brown, R-Carlsbad, Rep. Zach Cook, R-Ruidoso, Rep. Jim Dines, R-Albuquerque, Rep. Greg Nibert, R-Roswell, and Rep. Bill Rehm, R-Albuquerque.

The bill author offered, and the committee adopted, a substitute bill which is actually worse than the original legislation! While the restrictions on temporary gun transfers in HB 50 as introduced contained poorly-worded and inadequate exceptions for hunting, competitions, shooting range activities and some self-defense situations,

those exemptions are *gone*.

Instead, the measure now contains a blanket requirement that any transfer or loan of a firearm lasting more than five days be conducted through a federal firearm licensed dealer — which will involve government paperwork, a background check and payment of an undetermined fee. If you plan to let a friend borrow your rifle for a weeklong hunting trip or shooting competition, it would require a trip to a federal firearm licensed dealer. If you want to provide your girlfriend a handgun for protection while you're gone on an extended business trip, you must get government permission. If you are a military service member



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who has been deployed and wishes to leave personal firearms with a trusted friend, you would have to go through the same process.

Fail to do so and you could face up to just under a year in prison and up to a \$1,000 fine, or both. A second violation carries a felony penalty and loss of firearm rights. Further, the bill continues to limit your ability to

sell your own guns to nonimmediate family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers and fellow gun club members.

Bloomberg's national gun control organization, Everytown for Gun Safety, has targeted New Mexico with a campaign of misinformation and their radical restrictions on how you sell or transfer your private property. They will make a full push for passage of this measure in the House next week, so it is critical that your state representatives hear from you.

In addition to the dozens of National Rifle Association members who stayed late Friday to testify against HB 50, a special thank you also goes out to the following members of the pro-Second Amendment law enforcement community who attended the hearing in opposition to the bill: Sheriff Tony Mace and Undersheriff Michael Munk, of Cibola County; Sheriff Louis Burkhard and Undersheriff Mark Shea, of Valencia County; Sheriff Mike Lucero, of Guadalupe County; Sheriff Raymond Gutierrez, of Harding County; and Undersheriff Mark Reeves, of Curry County. All 33 sheriffs in New Mexico stand firmly in opposition to House Bill 50.