CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE
2024 SESSION UPDATE

APRIL 25, 2024

As we approach late April – with the April 26th deadline for policy committees to hear and report fiscal bills introduced in their house to fiscal committee rapidly approaching, and countless bills still in play – activity at our State Capitol is banging on all cylinders.

This Report *"California State Legislature – 2024 Session Update"* will provide you with the latest status of all bills of concern currently under consideration at our State Capitol.

All new activity since our last Report and the status of each bill is shown in italics.
Bills are placed in numerical order, not in order of priority or interest.

The latest status of each bill is shown in italics.

Legislation is listed in bill number order, not in order of priority or interest.

- AB 262 (Holden) **– Children's Camps: Safety and Regulation**

As amended September 1, 2023, AB 262 by Assembly Member Chris Holden (D/41-Pasadena) is a "two-year" bill that would require the Department of Social Services (DSS) to convene and consult with a stakeholder group on children's camp safety. In doing so, the bill specifically would require that the stakeholder group be composed of representatives from the Department of Public Health, the Department of Education, the Department of Industrial Relations, and the Department of Parks and Recreation. AB 262 would also require that the stakeholder group include various stakeholders – specifically including parent advocate groups and children's safety groups. Further, the bill would require the stakeholder group to make recommendations to address, among other things, a definition for a children's camp and child supervision requirements – including appropriate qualifications and training for camp staff that oversee activities that carry an "inherent or heightened risk", including "gun ranges".

Of primary concern, AB 262 does not require that the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) or wildlife conservation or recreational shooting groups be included in the stakeholder group. Given that DSS has no history of working with DFW, or with conservation or shooting organizations, our partner and lobbyist remains concerned that if our interests are not specifically called out in the bill we will not be at the table. Without our representation, we believe AB 262 would result in unnecessary and costly regulations being placed on camps, while not appropriately educating youth on wildlife conservation, or our hunting, fishing, and archery pastimes, and firearms safety.

To address these concerns, our partner and lobbyist*, Ducks Unlimited (DU),* and *California Rifle and Pistol Association (CRPA)* met with the author's office several times during the 2023 Session to try to

secure amendments to the bill which would ensure wildlife conservation, shooting organizations, and DFW are appropriately represented in the stakeholder group discussions.

Our lobbyist *and DU* met again with the author's office in early January 2024 in another attempt to seek necessary amendments to the bill. During this most recent meeting, we were told that AB 262 had been handed over to the Governor's office at their request and that we should coordinate any future discussions regarding the legislation with them. In February 2024, our lobbyist *and DU* met with the Governor's office to discuss our concerns. That meeting went well, giving us hope that, should the bill move forward, it will be amended to address our concerns. We have continued to stay in close touch with the Governor's office on this legislation, but with the budget and countless other issues being on their plate, there have been no new developments on AB 262.

During the 2023 Session, AB 262 easily passed through the Assembly and the Senate. Passing off the Senate Floor in early September, AB 262 was immediately sent back to the Assembly for their vote of approval of amendments placed in the bill in the Senate. However, prior to being brought up for that vote, AB 262 was ordered to the inactive file at the request of the author and became a "two-year" bill.

Because AB 262 was pulled from consideration one final Assembly Floor vote short of making it to the Governor's desk, it has until the last day of the 2024 Session – August 31st – to be taken up for that final vote.

During the 2022 Session, we actively opposed and defeated AB 1737 – somewhat similar legislation also brought forth by Assembly Member Holden.

To view all the information currently available on AB 262, click AB 262 Detail

- AB 828 (Connelly) **– Sustainable Groundwater Management: Managed Wetlands**

Established in current law, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires all groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins by the Department of Water Resources that are designated as basins subject to critical conditions of overdraft to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) or coordinated GSPs as of January 31, 2020. Further, SGMA requires all other groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins to be managed under a GSP or coordinated GSPs as of January 31, 2022. However, current law does not recognize the environmental benefits nor make any exception for artificially irrigated wetland habitats in basins subject to SGMA that depend upon groundwater for seasonal management.

As a result of the significant changes to our natural hydrology, only 5% of historical wetland habitats remain in California. Today, nearly all our remaining interior wetlands must be artificially irrigated and intensely managed, year-round, to recreate seasonal wetland values. These managed wetland habitats not only provide critical habitat for migratory waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species, but they also improve water quality, provide groundwater recharge, and offer flood protection and recreational benefits. The availability of a wetland water supply when, where, and in the quantity necessary is integral to the ability of public and private land managers to recreate these important habitat benefits. As such, SGMA generated restrictions placed on the use of groundwater for wetland irrigations in some areas – such as the

Tulare Basin in the southern San Joaquin Valley – could have devastating impacts on the ability of landowners to manage their lands to provide maximum wetland habitat values.

Because of the substantial loss of our historical wetland base, in 1993, the State adopted a "no net loss" wetlands policy pursuant to Executive Order No. W-59-93. The goal of the EO being to balance wetland loss due to economic development with wetland protection and restoration so that the total acreage of wetlands in the state does not decrease, but rather remains constant or increases.

SGMA currently requires a groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) to consider the interests of environmental users of groundwater and GSPs to describe impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems and beneficial users of groundwater – including managed wetlands. Despite these provisions, SGMA does not protect against wetland losses or ensure availability of historic wetland groundwater supplies. Further, management actions in initial GSPs have shown a significant net loss of managed wetlands in the relatively short period since SGMA implementation. GSAs have begun to impose one-size-fits-all caps on groundwater pumping, regardless of whether land uses provide public beneficial uses, and hefty fees, including up to $500 per acre-foot for additional pumping. With just 5% of historic wetlands remaining, the additional wetland losses likely to occur under SGMA could substantially jeopardize the health of Pacific Flyway waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species.

As amended January 11, 2024, AB 828 by Assembly Member Damon Connelly (D/12-San Rafael) would, among other things, prohibit a GSA from using their authority to limit groundwater extraction by those who must rely upon groundwater for managing wetland habitats. AB 828 would also prohibit a GSA from imposing a fee upon "managed wetland extractors", provided the water use for each user does not increase above the extractor's average annual extraction from 2015 to 2020. As amended, AB 828 would sunset on January 1, 2028.

AB 828 defines a "managed wetland" as an existing publicly or privately owned wetland that receives seasonal, semi-permanent, or permanent flooding to simulate natural processes that promote food production and habitat for the benefit of wetland-dependent species, and which is designated as, or administered as a:

> (1) State wildlife area;
> (2) National wildlife refuge;
> (3) Central Valley Project Improvement Act wetland habitat area;
> (4) Conservation easement held by a federal or state resource agency, a local agency whose primary function is managing land or water for wetland habitat purposes, or a non-governmental conservation organization; or
> (5) Wildlife habitat contract or other conservation agreement of no less than ten years in duration administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or Natural Resources Conservation Service.

AB 828 defines a "managed wetland extractor" as a person who extracts groundwater solely for managed wetland purposes.

Moving quickly, AB 828 passed through the Assembly policy committee, Assembly fiscal committee, and off the Assembly Floor and to the Senate in January 2024.

AB 828 is still pending referral to Senate policy committee. AB 828 has until July 3rd to be heard and passed out of Senate policy committee.

To view our original AB 828 coalition letter of support to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee dated March 21, 2023, click AB 828 – 2023 Support – Assy WPW

To view our updated AB 828 coalition letter of support to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee dated January 4, 2024, click AB 828 – 2024 Support – Assy WPW

To view all the information currently available on AB 828, click AB 828 Detail

- AB 1889 (Friedman) **– General Plan: Wildlife Connectivity Element**

Existing law requires cities or counties to adopt a comprehensive general plan that includes various elements, including land use, housing, and conservation elements. Existing law requires the conservation element to consider the effect of development within the jurisdiction on natural resources located on public lands.

As amended April 15, 2024, AB 1889 by Assembly Member Laura Friedman (D/44-Burbank) would require the conservation element to consider the effect of development on the movement of wildlife and habitat connectivity. Among other things, the bill would require the conservation element to identify and analyze connectivity areas, permeability, and natural landscape areas within the jurisdiction, identify and analyze existing or planned wildlife passage features, and consider the impacts of development and the barriers caused by development to wildlife and habitat connectivity.

AB 1889 was double-referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee and the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee.

AB 1889 was heard in the Assembly Local Government Committee on April 10th, passing out on an 8 to 1 vote. AB 1189 was then heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 23rd, passing out on a 10 to 3 vote. AB 1889 must now be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee but has not yet been set for hearing.

AB 1889 must be heard and passed out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee by May 17th to meet legislative deadline.

To view all the information currently available on AB 1889, click AB 1889 Detail

- AB 2320 (Irwin) **– Wildlife Connectivity and Climate Adaptation Act of 2024: Wildlife Corridors**

As amended April 24, 2024, AB 2320 by Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin (D/42-Thousand Oaks) would require the Natural Resources Agency to identify key wildlife corridors, connections between large blocks of natural areas and habitats, progress on protecting wildlife corridors, and set goals for wildlife corridor protection in the next 5 years. AB 2320 would also make it the policy of the state to preserve, protect, and restore wildlife habitats and biodiversity through the acquisition and restoration of blocks of habitat and

natural lands that are connected by wildlife corridors and the infrastructure that supports wildlife corridors. The bill would require the state to identify priority projects for the acquisition, restoration, protection, and expansion of wildlife corridors, and to give priority to projects that protect wildlife corridors, including wildlife corridors threatened by urban development.

AB 2320 was double-referred to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee and the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources. AB 2320 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 9th, passing out on a 12 to 2 vote. The bill was then heard in the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources on April 22nd, passing out and to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote.

AB 2320 must be heard and passed out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee by May 17th to meet legislative deadline.

To view all the information currently available on AB 2320, click AB 2320 Detail

- AB 2425 (Essayli) **– Bowie's Law: Animals: Adoption, Shelter Overcrowding, and Breeding**

As amended April 1, 2024, AB 2425 by Assembly Member Bill Essayli (R/63-Corona) would have among other things, lowered the criteria for a "breeder" to be regulated under the Polanco-Lockyer Pet Breeder Warranty Act from an individual or entity that has sold, transferred, or given away all or part of three or more litters or 20 or more dogs during the preceding 12 months, to one that has sold, transferred, or given away all or part of two or more litters or ten or more dogs.

In doing so, AB 2425 would have held countless small hobby breeders and purebred dog enthusiasts to the same strict requirements placed on high volume breeders, when they are not contributing to the problem of increasing shelter populations that this bill seeks to address.

High volume commercial dog breeders in California are already heavily regulated. Additionally, state law already makes it a crime for any dog owner – including hobby breeders – to deprive animals of food or shelter, or subject them to needless suffering. Although other portions of AB 2425 may have had merit, the provisions addressed above would not have impacted target problem dog breeders. Instead, they would have placed added burdens and expense on lawful small breeders – causing many to cease their operations entirely. Those small breeders who did stay in business would have little choice but to pass the added costs to consumers, making it extremely difficult for California's public not only to find, but also to afford a purebred dog.

Dogs used for hunting, field trialing and other legitimate sporting purposes are typically purebred breeds. Dogs used for these activities are already of high value (with untrained pups often going for several thousand dollars), the result of careful selective breeding over many generations, and given exceptional care to ensure their health and well-being. These carefully bred dogs rarely, if ever, end up in shelters or pose a public nuisance, safety, or health issue.

With our coalition letter of opposition on file, AB 2425 was heard in the Assembly Business and Professions Committee on April 16th. Following public testimony in support and opposition of the bill,

the Committee Chair asked the committee if anyone would like to make a motion to move the bill. After a lengthy silence, the Chair closed discussion on AB 2425 and moved on to the next bill.

Following the hearing, our partner and lobbiest contacted the author's office and confirmed that he has no plans to try to move the bill. AB 2425 is dead.

To view our coalition letter to the Assembly Business and Professions Committee in strong opposition to AB 2425, click AB 2425 – Oppose – Assy B&P

To view all the information currently available on AB 2425, click AB 2425 Detail

- AB 2875 (Freidman) **– Wetlands: State Policy**

By Executive Order No. W-59-93, former Governor Pete Wilson declared it to be the policy of the state that its Comprehensive Wetlands Policy rests on three primary objectives, including the objective of ensuring no overall net loss and long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values.

As introduced, AB 2875 by Assembly Member Laura Friedman (D/44-Burbank) would declare that it is the policy of the state to ensure no net loss and long-term gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California.

AB 2875 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 9th, passing out to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote. Upon receipt in the Assembly Appropriations Committee SB 865 was referred to suspense file. AB 2875 must be heard and passed out of Assembly Appropriations Committee by May 17th to meet legislative deadline but has not yet been set to be heard.

To view all the information currently available on AB 2875, click AB 2875 Detail

- AB 3064 (Maienschein) **– Firearms: Safety Devices**

Existing law requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to compile and maintain a roster listing of all the firearm safety devices that have been tested by a certified testing laboratory, have been determined to meet DOJ's standards for firearm safety devices, and thus may be sold in this state.

As amended April 16, 2024, AB 3064 by Assembly Member Brian Maienschein (D/76-San Diego) would, commencing on January 1, 2026, authorize DOJ to charge an annual fee to each entity that manufactures or imports into the state for sale any firearm safety device listed on the roster. The fee may not exceed the costs of research and development, report analysis, storage of prototype devices, and other program infrastructure costs necessary to implement the requirements of the bill. Among many other things, AB 3064 would also require that any device newly added to the roster have the name of the manufacturer, the model number, and the model name, as they appear on the roster, engraved or otherwise permanently affixed to the device.

Existing law requires a person bringing a firearm into the state, to mail or personally deliver to the Department of Justice (DOJ) a report within 60 days describing the firearm and providing personal

information. Among other things, as amended, AB 3064 would require the person to electronically submit the report and authorize DOJ to request photographs of the firearm to determine if it is a prohibited weapon.

Because AB 3064 would impose a tax, it would require for passage the approval of 2/3rds of the membership of each house of the Legislature.

AB 3064 was heard in the Assembly Public Safety Committee on April 23rd, amended, and passed to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a party-line vote. AB 3064 must be heard and passed out of Assembly Appropriations Committee by May 17th to meet legislative deadline but has not yet been set to be heard.

To view all the information currently available on AB 3064, click AB 3064 Detail

- AB 3067 (Gipson) **– Residential Property Insurance: Firearms**

As introduced, AB 3067 by Assembly Member Mike A. Gipson (D/65-Gardena) would have required an insurer of residential property to include questions on their application for homeowner's or renter's insurance regarding the presence and storage of any firearms kept in the household, in accessory structures, or in vehicles kept on the property that are subject to any applicable insurance policy. AB 3067 would have gone into effect on January 1, 2026, and required an insurer to annually report this information to the Department of Insurance and the Legislature beginning on January 1, 2027.

AB 3067 was set to be heard in the Assembly Insurance Committee on April 18th but was pulled from consideration by the author. Our partner and lobbyist contacted the author's office shortly after the hearing and was told that it was unlikely that the author will try to move AB 3067, as introduced, forward. True to his word, AB 3067 was gutted and amended on April 22nd. As amended, AB 3067 now deals with the activities of the California Interscholastic Federation.

To view all the information currently available on AB 3067, click AB 3067 Detail

- SB 53 (Portantino) **– Firearms Storage**

Existing law imposes storage requirements to prevent children from gaining access to firearms.

As amended January 3, 2024, SB 53 by Senator Anthony J. Portantino (D/25-Glendale) would prohibit a person from keeping or storing a firearm in their residence unless the firearm is stored in a locked box or safe that is listed on the DOJ's list of approved firearms safety devices and properly engaged to render the firearm inaccessible to anyone other than the owner or other authorized user. SB 53 would go into effect beginning on July 1, 2025.

SB 53 passed out of the Senate Public Safety Committee on January 9th and then out of Senate Appropriations Committee and to the Senate Floor on January 18th via a party-line votes. SB 53 passed off the Senate Floor via another party-line vote on January 29th.

SB 53 is currently pending referral in the Assembly.

To view all the information currently available on SB 53, click SB 53 Detail

- SB 921 (Roth) **– Animal Welfare**

Existing law makes it a crime to inflict unnecessary cruelty or to abuse an animal in any manner, including, but not limited to, maliciously and intentionally maiming, mutilating, torturing, or wounding an animal.

As amended April 8, 2024, SB 921 by Senator Richard D. Roth (D/31-Riverside) would additionally make it a crime to otherwise abuse or subject a living animal to needless suffering. However, as amended, SB 921 would require that specified handling and husbandry practices widely regarded as routine, including rodeo or rodeo related events, not be presumed to constitute animal mistreatment. As amended, the bill would also make animal treatment laws inapplicable to acts authorized pursuant to permits issued by a state or federal wildlife agency as part of a wildlife conservation research or recovery effort including, but not limited to, immobilizations, vaccinations, tagging, banding, collaring, or similar activities.

Among other things, as amended, SB 921 also expressly states that the bill's provisions do not interfere with any of the laws known as the "game laws." The bill also states that its provisions "do not interfere with the right to destroy any venomous reptile, or any animal known as dangerous to life, limb, or property, or interfere with the right to kill an animal used for food."

Our partner and lobbyist was concerned that the lack of a specific definition of the term "mistreat" in SB 921, as introduced, could have opened the door for animal-rights interests to place law-abiding individuals –including those who are safely training a dog for sporting purposes or other reasons – at risk.

SB 921, as amended March 13, 2024, was heard in Senate Public Safety Committee on April 2nd, passing out on a unanimous vote. The bill must next be heard in Senate Appropriations Committee but has not yet been set for hearing. SB 921 must be heard and passed out of Senate Appropriations Committee by May 17th to meet legislative deadline but has not yet been set to be heard.

To view all the information currently available on SB 921, click SB 921 Detail

- SB 922 (Roth) **– Animal Cruelty**

Existing law makes it a crime to leave or confine an animal in an unattended motor vehicle under conditions that endanger the health or well-being of an animal due to heat, cold, lack of adequate ventilation, lack of food or water, or other circumstances that could reasonably be expected to cause suffering, disability, or death to the animal. Existing law makes a first conviction for the crime punishable by a fine not exceeding $100, or if the animal suffers great bodily injury, by a fine not exceeding $500, imprisonment in a county jail, or both. Existing law makes a subsequent conviction punishable by a fine not exceeding $500 dollars, imprisonment in a county jail, or both. Existing law requires a person who is convicted of specified crimes related to animal abuse, and who is granted probation, to successfully complete counseling.

As introduced, SB 922 by Senator Richard D. Roth (D/31-Riverside) would have increased those fines to $500 for a first offense and $2,000 for a subsequent offense or if the animal suffers great bodily injury. SB 922 would also have expanded the requirement to require a person convicted of leaving an animal in an unattended motor vehicle to complete counseling, an education program on the dangers of leaving an animal inside of an unattended motor vehicle, or both. Further, the bill would have made failure to complete the counseling or education program a misdemeanor.

Our parnter and lobbyist was concerned that – given the loose language of existing law and the significant increase in fines and penalties that this bill proposes – SB 922 could also embolden animal-rights interests to attempt to place well meaning, law-abiding individuals at unreasonable risk.

SB 922 was set to be heard in Senate Public Safety Committee on April 2nd but was pulled from consideration. SB 922 is dead.

To view all the information currently available on SB 922, click SB 922 Detail

- SB 1160 (Portantino) **– Firearms: Annual Registration of Firearms**

As introduced, SB 1160 by Senator Anthony J. Portantino (D/25-Glendale) would have required firearms to be annually registered with DOJ. The bill would also have required registrants to annually pay a "to be determined" registration fee to fund DOJ's administration and enforcement of the firearm registry. The bill would have required DOJ to establish and maintain a system for the annual registration of firearms and create the Registered Firearm File.

SB 1160 would have exempted antique firearms, as well as firearms used in service by a peace officer, firearms owned by any department or agency of the state or federal government, or any firearm owned by the Armed Forces of the United States, California National Guard, or California State Guard. Firearms personally owned by any employee or appointee of these entities would not have been exempted.

SB 1160 would have required that all guns be registered as of July 1, 2025.

With our coalition letter of strong opposition to SB 1160 on file, the bill was slated to be heard in the Senate policy committee on April 2nd. At that hearing, as we readied to testify in opposition, the bill's author suddenly announced that he was pulling SB 1160 from consideration. Days later, SB 1160 was gutted and amended to deal with open carry of handguns.

To view our coalition letter of strong opposition to SB 1160 to the Senate Public Safety Committee, click SB 1160 – Oppose – Senate PS

To view all the information currently available on SB 1160, click SB 1160 Detail

- SB 1163 (Dahle) **– Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions: Wildlife Salvage Permits**

As amended April 17, 2024, SB 1163 by Senator Brian Dahle (R/01-Beiber) would improve public safety and greatly promote the health of California's deer and other wildlife by reducing the frequency of vehicle-wildlife collisions on our roadways. SB 1163 is sponsored by the *California Deer Association*.

First, some background. According to researchers at the University of California at Davis Road Ecology Center, as many as 100,000 deer alone may be hit each year on California roads. In addition to causing injury or often death to the deer, these accidents often also cause injury and sometimes death to motorists. To address this very serious concern, in 2019, the *California Deer Association* sponsored SB 395, "The Wildlife Traffic Safety Act", authored by Senator Bob Archuleta (D/30-Norwalk).

Signed into law by Governor Newsom in October 2019, SB 395 authorized DFW to establish a user-friendly cell phone app which would allow motorists to report the location, animal type, date, time, and characteristics of vehicle-wildlife collisions. Armed with this critically needed data, DFW, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and other state agencies could better predict road-kill hotspots, measure contributing factors, and evaluate the placement of wildlife road crossings and other remedial actions to greatly reduce future vehicle-wildlife collisions.

To encourage data reporting, SB 395 also authorized the Fish and Game Commission to create a pilot program that allow motorists to salvage edible portions of deer, elk, antelope, and/or wild pig meat that had been accidentally killed via a vehicle collision – provided they obtain a permit which would require they provide the above noted information to DFW. SB 395 also required the Commission to promulgate the regulations necessary to commence the program by no later than January 1, 2022. Lastly, SB 395 would "sunset" on January 1, 2029, to allow DFW, other relevant agencies, and the Commission to evaluate the results and consider next steps.

Unfortunately, to pass SB 395 out of fiscal committee in 2019 we had to take language into the legislation which required a special appropriation by the Legislature for the bill's programs to be enacted.

Each Session since the passage of SB 395, CDA and our partner conservation organizations fought to secure the special appropriation necessary to implement the important programs called out in the bill. Unfortunately, the funding necessary to implement SB 395 was never appropriated, leaving California as one of the very few western states without such a program. Unsuccessful in those efforts, and with the deadline for implementing the programs now passed, follow-on legislation was necessary.

As amended, SB 1163 would eliminate the January 1, 2022, deadline for the Commission to establish this previously authorized pilot program and extend the repeal date for the pilot program to January 1, 2034. SB 1163 would require DFW to conclude the pilot program five years after the date of commencement. Perhaps of greatest importance, SB 1163 would delete the requirement that implementation of the pilot program be predicted upon a special appropriation by the Legislature.

SB 1163 was heard in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee on April 15th, amended, and passed out and to the Senate Appropriation Committee on consent. SB 1163 has been set to be heard in Senate Appropriations Committee on April 29th.

To view our coalition letter to the *Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee* in strong support of SB 1163, click SB 1163 – Support – Senate SNRW

To view all the information currently available on SB 1163, click SB 1163 Detail

- SB 1253 (Gonzalez) **– Firearms Safety Certificates**

Existing law requires any person who purchases or receives a firearm to possess a firearm safety certificate. Further current law requires an applicant to pass the written test to obtain or renew a firearm safety certificate and the payment of a $25 fee. Current law also provides that a firearm safety certificate shall expire 5 years after the date of issuance. Current law does not, however, require a firearm safety certificate for the *mere possession* of a firearm.

As amended April 3, 2024, SB 1253 by Senator Lena A. Gonzalez (D/33-Huntington Park) would, commencing on January 1, 2026, prohibit a person from possessing any firearm, except an antique firearm, without a valid, unexpired firearm safety certificate. As amended, SB 1253 would only apply to a person who was required by law to obtain either a basic firearms safety certificate, a handgun safety certificate, or a firearm safety certificate at the time they purchased, received, or imported the firearm.

As amended, SB 1253 would require any person moving into California with a firearm to obtain a firearm safety certificate within 120 days after arriving in the state. The bill would allow a person with an expired certificate a 60-day grace period in which to renew the certificate. The bill would also require DOJ to notify certificate holders in a timely manner when their certificates are expiring.

Existing law exempts a person, 18 years of age or older, who has a valid hunting license from the firearms safety certificate requirement, except as to handguns. Further, existing law exempts any individuals who have a valid concealed weapons permit from the firearm safety certificate requirement. Conversations with the author's office have confirmed that these exemptions would remain in effect, should SB 1253 be signed into law.

SB 1253 was heard in the Senate Public Safety Committee on April 2nd, passing out and to the Senate Appropriation Committee on a party-line vote. SB 1253 has been set to be heard in Senate Appropriations Committee on April 29th.

To view all the information currently available on SB 1253, click SB 1253 Detail