



SHERIFF

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August 14, 2012

The Honorable Anthony Portantino
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Opposition to AB 1527

Dear Assemblyman Portantino,

As the Sheriff of Riverside County, I am opposed to AB 1527, which would prohibit the open carry of **unloaded** rifles and shotguns in public. Riverside County is the fourth largest in size and population (2.3 million) of California's 58 counties, and contains rural farming areas, desert and mountain regions, and highly urbanized areas. We are home to a large number of recreational shooting sports enthusiasts.

This bill extends banning of the open carry ban of **unloaded** handguns to **unloaded** rifles and shotguns; the ban on open carry of **unloaded** handguns was previously passed by the legislature, but for many of us did not address any real issue other than public perception.

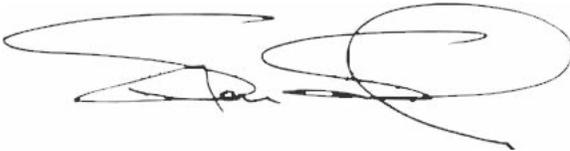
Setting aside issues of Second Amendment concerns by many, this proposed bill simply increases the unnecessary complexity to our citizens in enjoying legitimate shooting sports – hunting, competition, target shooting and other recreational shooting – and for our law enforcement officers who must enforce it with any “reasonable” exceptions. In addition, it further undermines the current legal foundations of California's CCW (Carry Concealed Weapon) discretionary issuance by police chiefs and sheriffs.

Proponents of the bill say that open carry demonstrators create a safety risk for law enforcement officers and the public, and in some circumstances create an unnecessary draw on scarce police resources. However, all demonstrations create a need for law enforcement resources, regardless of the reason for the demonstration. Moreover, our law enforcement agencies have always trained our officers in reference to proper procedures. And for the last four decades, and over the course of my 35-year plus law enforcement career, open carry of **unloaded** firearms has not presented any problems in our communities.

Other than reacting to a non-problem, I fail to see the value in adding to the complexity of our existing laws. Like the law banning the open carry of handguns passed a short while back, this bill will create a tangle of open carry rules and exemptions which will be confusing to the average citizen. My recommendation is that we pause on consideration of any further banning of open carry of unloaded firearms until we assess those earlier efforts. We already have a great deal of anxiety within our communities by citizens concerned over Second Amendment Rights along with growing concerns over personal safety after passage of AB 109 (Realignment) and the release of so many early from parole. Even the timing on this proposed bill is poor.

For these reasons, I oppose AB 1527. If there are questions, they can be directed to me at (951) 955-0147.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stan Sniff', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Stan Sniff
Sheriff, Riverside County

CC: Senator Joel Anderson
Senator Bob Dutton
Senator Bill Emmerson
Senator Juan Vargas
Assemblyman Paul Cook
Assemblyman Kevin Jeffries
Assemblyman Jeff Miller
Assemblyman Mike Morrell
Assemblyman Brian Nestande
Assemblyman V. Manual Perez
California State Sheriffs' Association