



April 2, 2018

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia, Chair
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
1020 N Street, Suite 160
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 3117 (Dahle/Mathis) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Garcia:

The below signatory wildlife conservation, farming and ranching organizations strongly urge your support for AB 3117 (Dahle/Mathis), legislation which would ensure that hunters can stay in the field and farmers and ranchers can continue to protect their property and livestock as California works to fully phase-in the requirement to use nonlead ammunition when hunting and managing wildlife statewide.

AB 711, legislation passed in 2013, will require the use of nonlead ammunition for the take of all wildlife species statewide as of July 1, 2019. With nonlead ammunition not required for the take of any wildlife (except waterfowl) in any other state except California, the manufacture and availability of nonlead ammunition is currently highly limited in many calibers, and non-existent in others. With demand low due to nonlead ammunition not currently required for most species, nonlead loads in some popular calibers can currently be found at some California sporting goods retailers. However, when the ban on lead ammunition goes into full effect statewide in July 2019, California's retailers will have difficulty acquiring the supply of nonlead ammunition necessary to meet skyrocketing demand.

Until recently, California's hunters, farmers and ranchers could look to out-of-state retailers to help meet the expected substantial increase in demand for nonlead munitions. However, the recent approval of proposals governing ammunition sales and purchase now restrict out-of-state acquisition and ban internet and mail-order purchase of ammunition without the cost-prohibitive step of going through a local retailer.

We do not believe the intent of AB 711 was to keep law-abiding hunters out of the field, nor to keep farmers and ranchers from protecting their property and livestock from wildlife damage. However, when combined with the passage of subsequent proposals which severely restrict ammunition acquisition, AB 711 will do just that. AB 3117 will address these unintended, yet very serious consequences by authorizing the California Fish and Game Commission to place a temporary suspension of the prohibition on the use of lead ammunition for a hunting season and/or caliber, should ammunition of that caliber not be reasonably available to California's public.

The land management efforts of undersigned organizations – combined with the restoration and maintenance of wildlife habitat paid for via the annual purchase of hunting licenses, tags and stamps – serve as the cornerstone of our state's wildlife conservation efforts. AB 3117 will ensure these substantial conservation benefits remain available to California's wildlife by keeping hunters in the field and allowing farmers and ranchers to protect their property and livestock as we make the transition to nonlead ammunition. Because of these reasons, we urge your strong support for AB 3117 when the bill comes before your committee on April 10th.

Sincerely,

Steve Chappell, Executive Director
Suisun Resource Conservation District

Justin Oldfield, V.P. of Government Affairs
California Cattlemen's Association

Erica Sanko, Executive Director
California Wool Growers Association

Mark Hennelly, V.P. of Government Affairs
California Waterfowl Association

Fred Harpster, President
The Black Brant Group

Dennis Slater, President
Tulare Basin Wetlands Association

Don Kirby, President
Cal-Ore Wetland and Waterfowl Council

Chriss Bowles
California Bowmen Hunters/State Archery Association

Noelle G. Cremers, Director of Natural Resources and Commodities
California Farm Bureau Federation

Robert Lawson, President
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter - Safari Club International

Mitch Oliver, President
California State Chapter - National Wild Turkey Federation

cc: Members, Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
The Honorable Assembly Member Brian Dahle
The Honorable Assembly Member Devon Mathis