



March 27, 2019

The Honorable Assembly Member Marc Levine
 State Capitol Room 5135
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 18 (As Amended March 21, 2019) - OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Levine,

The undersigned wildlife conservation organizations must strongly oppose your AB 18 (as amended March 21, 2019) – legislation which would impose an additional excise tax in the amount of \$25 per firearm purchased as new from a retailer to fund the California Violence Intervention and Prevention Grant Program (CalVIP).

Our organizations certainly support the implementation of successful programs which address gun violence prevention and intervention. However, because all of California’s law-abiding public support and would benefit from these efforts, all should equally help to fund their implementation. Yet, under your AB 18, only law-abiding citizens who legally purchase their firearms from retailers would be subject to this additional excise tax. As such, AB 18 would inappropriately place the entire obligation of funding these violence prevention and intervention programs on the backs of law-abiding hunters and shooters who have no more to do with firearm violence than any other law-abiding Californian.

Further, AB 18 would also impact California’s wildlife and the enjoyment they provide our public. Law-abiding hunters, shooters and others who legally purchase sporting arms and munitions already pay an 11% federal excise tax on the purchase of these goods via the Pittman-Robertson Act. This tax

contributes tens of millions of dollars annually to the Department of Fish and Wildlife – revenue which funds a large portion of our state’s wildlife management, conservation and research efforts. Placing another tax on top of the excise tax sporting arms are already subject to will only further drive up the cost of these goods, reduce their sales and, in turn, reduce the critical annual revenues available for California’s wildlife conservation and management efforts.

Our organizations support balanced programs intended to reduce crime and take criminals off our streets. All of California’s citizens support and benefit from these efforts. Yet, your AB 18 would unfairly place the entire burden of funding CalVIP on a very small law-abiding segment of our public and have unintended impacts on our state’s wildlife conservation efforts.

For all the above reasons, our organizations have no choice but to strongly oppose your AB 18.

Sincerely,

Kyle Weaver, President and CEO
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

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

Lori Jacobs, President
California Houndsmen for Conservation

Gary F. Brennan, President
San Diego County Wildlife Federation

Fred Harpster, President
The Black Brant Group

Dennis Slater, President
Tulare Basin Wetlands Association

Aoibheann Cline, Western States Coordinator
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Donn Walgamuth, President
California Deer Association

Don Kirby, President
Cal-Ore Wetland and Waterfowl Council

Chriss Bowles, President
California Bowmen Hunters/State Archery Association

Darryl Williams, President
California Chapter – Wild Sheep Foundation

Rick Travis, Executive Director
California Rifle and Pistol Association

Cathie Nelson, President
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter – Safari Club International

Dawnita Harwood, President
California State Chapter – National Wild Turkey Federation