

**ANTHONY J. CRAVER**  
Sheriff-Coroner



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*Administrative Services*  
**Captain Kevin Broin**  
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**Lieutenant Tim Pearce**  
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**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**  
**OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF-CORONER**

May 2, 2005

Assembly Member Patty Berg  
First Assembly District  
State Capitol, Room 2137  
Sacramento CA 95814-0001

Dear Patty,

I am writing to ask you to vote in opposition to two bills relating to firearms and ammunition. AB 352 (Kosetz) requires that after January 1, 2007, handguns approved for sale in California, must be manufactured with a mechanism that will microscopically imprint a unique number on the cartridge case as it fires. I'm certain that the author's rationale is that this will assist law enforcement in identifying criminals who shoot someone and leave a cartridge case at the crime scene. This sounds great and works in a laboratory environment where all elements are controlled, however in the real world, it's not much more than wishful thinking. The reasons this idea isn't realistic are numerous. To name a few, a large percentage of handguns used in violent crimes are either stolen or purchased out of state, so there would either be no number imprinted or the number would be registered to someone other than the bad guy. The mechanism in the gun that embosses the number can easily be intentionally destroyed, or inadvertently altered or destroyed by ordinary cleaning, or wear and tear. With millions upon millions of existing handguns owned in California, the probability of this bill having any positive effect on public safety is absurd. The only thing this bill will accomplish is to increase the cost of handguns. People are still going to buy them regardless.

SB 357 (Dunn) is one where handgun ammunition (including .22 rimfire) sold in California after the effective date of the law would be required to have a unique serial number, which would be registered to the purchaser in a Department of Justice Registry. This is another idea that is workable in a controlled environment but not practical. There are entirely too many variables for it to be an effective law enforcement tool. That having been said; the main reason I'm opposed to this bill is that it creates a large number of new criminal offenses for seemingly innocent acts. A person moving to California from another state and bringing handgun ammunition into the state, anyone giving, selling, or otherwise furnishing ammunition to another would be committing a crime. For example, if your husband went shooting with a friend and shared a box of his ammo, he could go to jail. If a person were stopped by an officer and a handgun cartridge was seen in the car, the officer would have probable cause to detain the driver until a supervisor could respond and microscopically examine the cartridge for a serial number, however long it would take. If there was no serial number visible, the driver would be subject to arrest. A person making his own bullets as so many handgun

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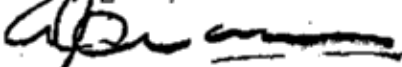
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shooters do, would be committing a separate crime for every bullet cast and if caught, subject to arrest. People go to public shooting ranges or public land to shoot and many just leave their expended cases lying where they fall. The bad guys go to the same places to shoot. How helpful will it be to law enforcement if the bad guy picks up a handful of expended cases and throws them down at a crime scene to confuse us good guys? Notwithstanding any of the above, the ammunition manufacturers are saying that they won't manufacture ammunition for sale in California. If that is true, there will be a huge black market in handgun ammunition because the demand won't go away just because we have outlawed the supply. Heroin, Cocaine, and Meth are good examples of how ineffective the laws are in keeping a substance off the street if consumers really want it. This is not a way to reduce gun related crimes. Lets face it; this is just one more way to make gun ownership in California more difficult for honest people.

Patty, I know that you legislators are doing your best to make this a better state and to meet the needs of society, but every year we get more and more gun laws that are confusing, onerous, difficult or impossible to enforce, and totally ineffective in terms of public safety. Please give this serious thought.

Best regards,



ANTHONY J. CRAVER  
SHERIFF-CORONER

AJC/dkm

CC: Ukiah Gun Club  
National Rifle Association  
California Rifle and Pistol Association  
File 14-05