

Alliana Salanguit

From: Janice Caulfield [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2023 1:15 PM
To: Senate Community and Regional Affairs; Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Cathy Giessel
Subject: OPPOSE Senate Bill 63, Limitations on Firearm Restrictions

To: Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee

I am 44 year resident of Juneau AK, my family owns a gun used for hunting, and I oppose SB63. After listening to the HCRA Committee meeting on March 16 regarding companion bill HB61, I am submitting more focused comments regarding the bill prior to your SCRA Committee meeting on March 21.

At the HCRA committee meeting, the proponents' emphasized their interest in "equity in commerce". If SB63 and HB61 were amended to address just this interest — that gun/ammo stores and gun ranges would remain open under a disaster declaration if other commercial businesses were allowed to remain open — then I personally would not oppose that version of the bill.

However, as currently written, the bills go far beyond that, and includes sections that could threaten public safety in times of disaster.

First — Bill proponents state that it would not eliminate existing restrictions or prohibitions on gun use and possession during time of disaster. However, that is not really the point of concern. What is critical and potentially dangerous is that the bill would not allow the Governor, state agencies or municipalities to place **any additional, temporary** restrictions on gun use and possession during a declared emergency — including sensible restrictions that may be temporarily needed to protect public safety.

Are you really saying that municipalities or disaster responders running emergency shelters in areas where guns are not currently prohibited (for example, a retail parking lot, a YMCA) would not be allowed to prohibit carrying firearms at those shelters, or even make smart rules about how shelter residents' firearms are stored? Wouldn't you agree that some rules about gun possession and use might be needed in that shelter to keep families and children safe in these crowded and potentially chaotic conditions?

Disaster agencies need to be able to respond to the particular risks and dangers in each emergency to keep us safe. Tying their hands and taking away needed tools and authorities makes no sense.

Second — It is outrageous that this law would be enforced by civil suit (including suits by special interest groups) and that those bringing suit could receive triple punitive damages from Alaska's governments or disaster response entities. The fear of costly litigation would be a dangerous distraction to state and local officials as they manage rapid disaster response in a crisis situation, and would dampen good decision-making that is in the public interest.

I am curious if the bill proponents — or members of the House or Senate CRA Committees — have asked Alaskan municipalities, the Alaska Municipal League, first responders, or disaster relief organizations their views regarding losing the authority to temporarily and in a limited manner restrict gun use or possession during a disaster, AND about the potential that they would be sued and suffer costly penalties if they took such action to protect the public.

I encourage you to fully understand ALL sections of this bill. Purportedly, the main interest is to keep gun stores open in a disaster. But, this bill goes far beyond ensuring "equity in commerce". I urge you to address that interest only, and delete the bill sections that limit the authority of state and municipal responders in times of emergency and that invoke enforcement by civil suit.

Thank you for your attention to my comments,

Jan Caulfield
Juneau, AK



ALASKA GUN RIGHTS



3/15/2023

Dear Members of the Senate Community & Regional Affairs Committee,

Alaska Gun Rights opposes SB63/HB61, versions A. Both of these bills are alleged to protect Alaskan's gun rights during times of emergency or disaster declarations. This is not true.

The proposed legislation claims to prevent gun stores and shooting ranges from being shut down by disaster declarations or emergency orders. It actually does the opposite. The legislation would allow government to shut down gun stores and ranges, along with other stores and businesses.

Both bills contain fatally flawed language. Starting page 1, line 15:

(4) *unless the closure or limitation applies equally to all forms of commerce within the jurisdiction, closing or limiting the operating hours of..*

The first half of that sentence gives government the authority to shutdown all commerce relating to firearms. This is unacceptable. We urge you to reject the language: "*unless the closure or limitation applies equally to all forms of commerce within the jurisdiction*".

Secondly, a prior version of the bill (of a previous legislature) started off with the word "Notwithstanding" on page 1, line 5, as opposed to "During" (the present versions). The word "Notwithstanding" would be superior and would extend additional protections for the 2nd Amendment.

Alaska Gun Rights was started in January 2020 and is Alaska's No-compromise Gun Rights Advocacy organization committed to defending our God-granted right to keep and bear arms. We are committed to stopping the erosion of our rights and the retaking of ground that has been lost.

Regards,

Rick McClure
President
Alaska Gun Rights
www.AlaskaGunRights.org