

Chairman Shirkey and Members of the Senate Government Operations Committee,

We write on behalf of the members of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc., in support of House Bills 5187/5188 and Senate Bills 950/951. NSSF is the firearm industry trade association. According to the most recent data from 2021, the firearm industry employed more than 11,700 Michiganders and had an economic impact of over \$1.89 billion in the state. In addition to having a positive economic impact in Michigan, the firearm industry plays a critical role for law enforcement, military personnel, law-abiding citizens who chose to exercise their Second Amendment rights and those who take part in Michigan's hunting traditions.

These bills would amend the "Emergency Management Act" and "Public Health Code" respectively, to disallow future emergency orders that would, "prohibit, suspend, or limit" the firearm industry and Second Amendment rights of Michigan residents. More specifically, they would protect the, "otherwise lawful possession, carrying, display, sale, transportation, transfer, defensive use, or other lawful use" of firearms and ammunition, along with their components and accessories during a declared emergency. They would also prohibit the registration or seizure of those items. Finally, Michigan's strong outdoor heritage would be safeguarded by provisions included in the bills that would protect the shooting sports, firearm training, hunting, fishing, and trapping during emergencies.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the firearm industry was automatically deemed to be "essential" in 23 states by laws like the one that would be created with these bills. As "stay home" orders were issued in March of 2020, governors in 17 states designated our industry as "essential." At the end of March, the Department of Homeland Security updated their "Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce." That updated guidance included "Workers supporting the operation of firearm or ammunition product manufacturers, retailers, importers, distributors, and shooting ranges." Three more states took that guidance, and our industry was open in 43 states. Unfortunately for Michiganders, their state Executive Branch was one of just 7 in the country to use the pandemic and related emergency powers to close the firearm industry and accomplish their real goal – gun control.

The vast majority of state leaders agreed that Second Amendment rights are not forfeited during a pandemic and that it is important for citizens to be able to protect themselves and their loved ones during an emergency. Here in Michigan, by refusing to designate the firearm industry as "essential," Governor Whitmer rejected that commonsense principal. In an interview with Moms Demand Action in July of 2020, Governor Whitmer said "I would do it again...I'm not going to apologize. And I'm not going to be bullied into doing things differently...It was very clear, the purchase of a gun does not fall in that [life-sustaining] criteria."

Michigan citizens value their Second Amendment rights and the state's sporting heritage. For that reason, we respectfully ask that you vote in support of House Bills 5187/5188 and Senate Bills 950/951.

Respectfully,

Chris Lee

Midwest Director of Government Relations – State Affairs

National Shooting Sports Foundation