

Senate Bill No. 15

CHAPTER 248

An act to add Chapter 1.3 (commencing with Section 12125) to Title 2 of Part 4 of the Penal Code, relating to firearms.

[Approved by Governor August 27, 1999. Filed with
Secretary of State August 30, 1999.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 15, Polanco. Firearms.

Existing law makes it a misdemeanor or felony to manufacture or cause to be manufactured, import into the state, keep for sale, offer or expose for sale, give, lend, or possess specified weapons, but not including an unsafe handgun.

This bill, commencing January 1, 2001, would make it a misdemeanor to manufacture or cause to be manufactured, import into the state for sale, keep for sale, offer or expose for sale, give, or lend any unsafe handgun, except as specified. By creating new crimes, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

This bill additionally would require every person licensed to manufacture firearms pursuant to federal law who manufactures firearms in this state and every person who imports into the state for sale, keeps for sale, or offers or exposes for sale any firearm to certify under penalty of perjury that every model, kind, class, style, or type of pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person that he or she manufactures or imports, keeps, or exposes for sale is not a prohibited unsafe handgun. By expanding the crime of perjury, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The bill also would require any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person manufactured in this state, imported into the state for sale, kept for sale, or offered or exposed for sale, to be tested by an independent laboratory certified by the Department of Justice to determine whether that pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person meets or exceeds specified standards defining unsafe handguns. The bill would require the Department of Justice to certify laboratories for this purpose on or before January 1, 2001.

The bill also would require the Department of Justice, on and after January 1, 2001, to compile, publish, and thereafter maintain a roster listing all of the pistols, revolvers, and other firearms capable of being concealed upon the person that are not unsafe handguns by the manufacturer, model number, and model name. The bill would specify that its provisions do not apply to the sale, loan, or transfer of any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed

upon the person listed as a curio or relic. The bill would authorize the department to charge every person in this state who is licensed as a manufacturer of firearms pursuant to federal law, and any person in this state who manufactures or causes to be manufactured, imports into the state for sale, keeps for sale, or offers or exposes for sale any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person in this state, an annual fee not exceeding the costs of preparing, publishing, and maintaining the roster and the costs of research and development, report analysis, firearms storage, and other program infrastructure costs necessary to implement the bill.

The bill would state the intent of the Legislature that the Department of Justice pursue an internal loan from special fund revenues available to the department to cover startup costs for the unsafe handgun program established pursuant to the bill. The bill would require the department to repay any loan with the proceeds of fees collected under that program within 6 months.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 1.3 (commencing with Section 12125) is added to Title 2 of Part 4 of the Penal Code, to read:

CHAPTER 1.3. UNSAFE HANDGUNS

12125. (a) Commencing January 1, 2001, any person in this state who manufactures or causes to be manufactured, imports into the state for sale, keeps for sale, offers or exposes for sale, gives, or lends any unsafe handgun shall be punished by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year.

(b) This section shall not apply to any of the following:

(1) The manufacture in this state, or importation into this state, of any prototype pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person when the manufacture or importation is for the sole purpose of allowing an independent laboratory certified by the Department of Justice pursuant to Section 12130 to conduct an independent test to determine whether that pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person is prohibited by this chapter, and, if not, for the department to add the firearm to the roster of pistols, revolvers, and other firearms capable of being concealed upon the person that may be sold in this state pursuant to Section 12131.



(2) The importation or lending of a pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person by employees or authorized agents determining whether the weapon is prohibited by this section.

(3) Firearms listed as curios or relics, as defined in Section 178.11 of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(4) The sale to, purchase by, or possession of any pistol, revolver or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person by the Department of Justice, any police department, any sheriff's official, any marshal's office, the Youth and Adult Correctional Agency, the California Highway Patrol, any district attorney's office, and the military or naval forces of this state or of the United States for use in the discharge of their official duties. Nor shall anything in this section prohibit the possession of any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person by sworn members of these agencies, whether the sworn member is on or off duty, or an individual who is retired from service with a law enforcement agency and who is not otherwise prohibited from possessing a concealable firearm upon his or her retirement.

(c) Violations of subdivision (a) are cumulative with respect to each handgun and shall not be construed as restricting the application of any other law. However, an act or omission punishable in different ways by this section and other provisions of law shall not be punished under more than one provision, but the penalty to be imposed shall be determined as set forth in Section 654.

12126. As used in this chapter, "unsafe handgun" means any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person, as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 12001, for which any of the following is true:

(a) For a revolver:

(1) It does not have a safety device that, either automatically in the case of a double-action firing mechanism, or by manual operation in the case of a single-action firing mechanism, causes the hammer to retract to a point where the firing pin does not rest upon the primer of the cartridge.

(2) It does not meet the firing requirement for handguns pursuant to Section 12127.

(3) It does not meet the drop safety requirement for handguns pursuant to Section 12128.

(b) For a pistol:

(1) It does not have a positive manually operated safety device, as determined by standards relating to imported guns promulgated by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

(2) It does not meet the firing requirement for handguns pursuant to Section 12127.

(3) It does not meet the drop safety requirement for handguns pursuant to Section 12128.

12127. (a) As used in this chapter, the “firing requirement for handguns” means a test in which the manufacturer provides three handguns of the make and model for which certification is sought, these handguns not being in any way modified from those that would be sold if certification is granted, to an independent testing laboratory certified by the Attorney General pursuant to Section 12130. The laboratory shall fire 600 rounds from each gun, stopping after each series of 50 rounds has been fired for 5 to 10 minutes to allow the weapon to cool, stopping after each series of 100 rounds has been fired to tighten any loose screws and clean the gun in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, and stopping as needed to refill the empty magazine or cylinder to capacity before continuing. The ammunition used shall be of the type recommended by the handgun manufacturer in the user manual, or if none is recommended, any standard ammunition of the correct caliber in new condition. A handgun shall pass this test if each of the three test guns meets both of the following:

(1) Fires the first 20 rounds without a malfunction that is not due to faulty magazine or ammunition.

(2) Fires the full 600 rounds with no more than six malfunctions that are not due to faulty magazine or ammunition and without any crack or breakage of an operating part of the handgun that increases the risk of injury to the user.

(b) If a pistol or revolver fails the requirements of either paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (a) due to either a faulty magazine or faulty ammunition, the pistol or revolver shall be retested from the beginning of the “firing requirement for handguns” test. A new model of the pistol or revolver that failed due to a faulty magazine or ammunition may be submitted for the test to replace the pistol or revolver that failed.

(c) As used in this section, “malfunction” means a failure to properly feed, fire, or eject a round, or failure of a pistol to accept or reject a manufacturer-approved magazine, or failure of a pistol’s slide to remain open after a manufacturer-approved magazine has been expended.

12128. As used in this chapter, the “drop safety requirement for handguns” means that at the conclusion of the firing requirements for handguns described in Section 12127, the same certified independent testing laboratory shall subject the same three handguns of the make and model for which certification is sought, to the following test:

A primed case (no powder or projectile) shall be inserted into the chamber. For pistols, the slide shall be released, allowing it to move forward under the impetus of the recoil spring, and an empty magazine shall be inserted. For both pistols and revolvers, the weapon shall be placed in a drop fixture capable of dropping the pistol from a drop height of 1m + 1cm (39.4 + 0.4 in.) onto the largest



side of a slab of solid concrete having minimum dimensions of 7.5 × 15 × 15 cm (3 × 6 × 6 in.). The drop distance shall be measured from the lowermost portion of the weapon to the top surface of the slab. The weapon shall be dropped from a fixture and not from the hand. The weapon shall be dropped in the condition that it would be in if it were dropped from a hand (cocked with no manual safety applied). If the design of a pistol is such that upon leaving the hand a “safety” is automatically applied by the pistol, this feature shall not be defeated. An approved drop fixture is a short piece of string with the weapon attached at one end and the other end held in an air vise until the drop is initiated.

The following six drops shall be performed:

- (a) Normal firing position with barrel horizontal.
- (b) Upside down with barrel horizontal.
- (c) On grip with barrel vertical.
- (d) On muzzle with barrel vertical.
- (e) On either side with barrel horizontal.
- (f) If there is an exposed hammer or striker, on the rearmost point of that device, otherwise on the rearmost point of the weapon.

The primer shall be examined for indentations after each drop. If indentations are present, a fresh primed case shall be used for the next drop.

The handgun shall pass this test if each of the three test guns does not fire the primer.

12129. Every person who is licensed as a manufacturer of firearms pursuant to Chapter 44 (commencing with Section 921) of Title 18 of the United States Code who manufactures firearms in this state, and every person who imports into the state for sale, keeps for sale, or offers or exposes for sale any firearm, shall certify under penalty of perjury and any other remedy provided by law that every model, kind, class, style, or type of pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person that he or she manufactures or imports, keeps, or exposes for sale is not an unsafe handgun as prohibited by this chapter.

12130. (a) Any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person manufactured in this state, imported into the state for sale, kept for sale, or offered or exposed for sale, shall be tested within a reasonable period of time by an independent laboratory certified pursuant to subdivision (b) to determine whether that pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person meets or exceeds the standards defined in Section 12126.

(b) On or before October 1, 2000, the Department of Justice shall certify laboratories to verify compliance with the standards defined in Section 12126. The department may charge any laboratory that is seeking certification to test any pistol, revolver, or other firearm

capable of being concealed upon the person pursuant to this chapter a fee not exceeding the costs of certification.

(c) The certified testing laboratory shall, at the manufacturer's or importer's expense, test the firearm and submit a copy of the final test report directly to the Department of Justice along with a prototype of the weapon to be retained by the department. The department shall notify the manufacturer or importer of its receipt of the final test report and the department's determination as to whether the firearm tested may be sold in this state.

12131. (a) On and after January 1, 2001, the Department of Justice shall compile, publish, and thereafter maintain a roster listing all of the pistols, revolvers, and other firearms capable of being concealed upon the person that have been tested by a certified testing laboratory, have been determined not to be unsafe handguns, and may be sold in this state pursuant to this title. The roster shall list, for each firearm, the manufacturer, model number, and model name.

(b) (1) The department may charge every person in this state who is licensed as a manufacturer of firearms pursuant to Chapter 44 (commencing with Section 921) of Title 18 of the United States Code, and any person in this state who manufactures or causes to be manufactured, imports into the state for sale, keeps for sale, or offers or exposes for sale any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person in this state, an annual fee not exceeding the costs of preparing, publishing, and maintaining the roster pursuant to subdivision (a) and the costs of research and development, report analysis, firearms storage, and other program infrastructure costs necessary to implement this chapter.

(2) Any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person that is manufactured by a manufacturer who manufactures or causes to be manufactured, imports into the state for sale, keeps for sale, or offers or exposes for sale any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person in this state, and who fails to pay any fee required pursuant to paragraph (1), may be excluded from the roster.

12131.5. (a) A firearm shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subdivision (a) of Section 12131 if another firearm made by the same manufacturer is already listed and the unlisted firearm differs from the listed firearm only in one or more of the following features:

(1) Finish, including, but not limited to, bluing, chrome-plating, oiling, or engraving.

(2) The material from which the grips are made.

(3) The shape or texture of the grips, so long as the difference in grip shape or texture does not in any way alter the dimensions, material, linkage, or functioning of the magazine well, the barrel, the chamber, or any of the components of the firing mechanism of the firearm.



(4) Any other purely cosmetic feature that does not in any way alter the dimensions, material, linkage, or functioning of the magazine well, the barrel, the chamber, or any of the components of the firing mechanism of the firearm.

(b) Any manufacturer seeking to have a firearm listed under this section shall provide to the Department of Justice all of the following:

(1) The model designation of the listed firearm.

(2) The model designation of each firearm that the manufacturer seeks to have listed under this section.

(3) A statement, under oath, that each unlisted firearm for which listing is sought differs from the listed firearm only in one or more of the ways identified in subdivision (a) and is in all other respects identical to the listed firearm.

(c) The department may, in its discretion and at any time, require a manufacturer to provide to the department any model for which listing is sought under this section, to determine whether the model complies with the requirements of this section.

12132. This chapter shall not apply to any of the following:

(a) The sale, loan, or transfer of any firearm pursuant to Section 12082 or 12084 in order to comply with subdivision (d) of Section 12072.

(b) The sale, loan, or transfer of any firearm that is exempt from the provisions of subdivision (d) of Section 12072 pursuant to any applicable exemption contained in Section 12078, if the sale, loan, or transfer complies with the requirements of that applicable exemption to subdivision (d) of Section 12072.

(c) The sale, loan, or transfer of any firearm as described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 12125.

(d) The delivery of a pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person to a person licensed pursuant to Section 12071 for the purposes of the service or repair of that firearm.

(e) The return of a pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person by a person licensed pursuant to Section 12071 to its owner where that firearm was initially delivered in the circumstance set forth in subdivision (d).

(f) The return of a pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person by a person licensed pursuant to Section 12071 to its owner where that firearm was initially delivered to that licensee for the purpose of a consignment sale or as collateral for a pawnbroker loan.

(g) The sale, loan, or transfer of any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person listed as a curio or relic, as defined in Section 178.11 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

12133. The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to a single-action revolver that has at least a five-cartridge capacity with

a barrel length of not less than three inches, and meets any of the following specifications:

(a) Was originally manufactured prior to 1900 and is a curio or relic, as defined in Section 178.11 of Title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) Has an overall length measured parallel to the barrel of at least seven and one-half inches when the handle, frame or receiver, and barrel are assembled.

(c) Has an overall length measured parallel to the barrel of at least seven and one-half inches when the handle, frame or receiver, and barrel are assembled and that is currently approved for importation into the United States pursuant to the provisions of paragraph (3) of subsection (d) of Section 925 of Title 18 of the United States Code.

SEC. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature that the Department of Justice pursue an internal loan from special fund revenues available to the department to cover startup costs for the program established pursuant to Section 1 of this act. Any loan shall be repaid with the proceeds of fees collected under that program within six months.

SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

