

March 25, 2024

Colorado General Assembly
House Finance Committee
200 E Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Executive Director Dan Gibbs
1313 Sherman St.
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Chairman Snyder and Members of the House Finance Committee,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to you on behalf of tens-of-thousands of Colorado hunters, anglers, wildlife conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts to share our collective opposition to House Bill 24-1349, Firearms and Ammunition Excise Tax.

Like all Coloradans we put the safety of our communities and schools first. As hunters and recreational shooters, we have a long history of promoting firearm safety and responsible firearm ownership. However, we oppose placing an additional excise tax of 11% on the retail sale of all firearms dealers, firearm manufacturers and ammunition vendors in the state.

While we agree that the state would benefit from making available additional resources for crime victim support services, gun violence prevention, safe and lawful gun use, and enhancement of school safety, HB24-1349 inappropriately places the entire fiduciary burden of funding these programs on a single segment of Colorado's law-abiding public.

Moreover, firearms and ammunition are already subject to an 11% manufacturer-level federal excise tax on the sale of firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment pursuant to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman- Robertson; 16 U.S.C. §§669 et seq.). It is important to note that it ~~this~~ was sportsmen and women who stepped forward to advocate that this pre-existing tax be redirected specifically towards wildlife conservation through providing funding for states and territories to support wildlife restoration, conservation, and hunter education and safety programs.”

The funds collected through Pittman-Robertson are distributed back to state game and fish agencies. Last year alone Colorado Parks and Wildlife received \$32,311,971 million in Pittman-Robertson monies. These funds contribute significantly to our state's wildlife management, conservation, research efforts and hunter safety programs.

HB24-1349 is inherently different from the excise taxes under the Pittman-Robertson Act, which are placed on manufacturers, rather than taxing an individual's right to purchase a firearm or ammunition. By significantly increasing the overall tax rate all firearms and ammunition, HB24-1349 would very likely reduce their sales in-state and, in turn, would negatively impact the federal Pittman-Robertson dollars on which all state fish and wildlife agencies, including Colorado Parks and Wildlife, rely on for critical wildlife conservation and management efforts

Additionally, by substantially raising the cost of purchasing a firearm and ammunition in Colorado, HB24-1349 would disproportionately impact the ability of economically

disadvantaged communities and individuals to legally purchase a firearm and ammunition for hunting and recreational shooting, restricting their ability to enjoy these outdoor recreational pursuits.

For the reasons stated above, we urge your opposition to HB24-1349.

Sincerely,

Members of the Colorado Wildlife Conservation Project

