



## **SB 17 Stop Illegal Gun Trade Act – NMBC Opposes**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the New Mexico Business Coalition, we respectfully oppose **SB 17**, the Stop Illegal Gun Trade Act.

While the stated intent of SB 17 is to reduce illegal gun trafficking, the bill instead places expansive new liabilities and compliance requirements on lawful, federally licensed firearms dealers—most of whom are small, locally owned businesses operating in full compliance with existing state and federal law. These businesses are not the source of illegal firearms, yet SB 17 treats them as if they are.

The bill creates significant legal uncertainty by exposing retailers to broad civil liability for criminal acts committed by third parties, even when dealers have followed all required procedures. The cost of expanded compliance, insurance, legal exposure, and ongoing litigation risk will make it economically untenable for many lawful dealers to continue operating in New Mexico. The predictable result is store closures, job losses, and reduced access to lawful commerce—without a corresponding reduction in violent crime.

SB 17 also infringes on the rights of law-abiding New Mexicans to purchase lawful firearms for self-defense, hunting, and shooting sports by restricting access through the closure of compliant retailers and the imposition of excessive liability. When legal dealers are driven out of business, responsible citizens—not criminals—bear the consequences. Individuals seeking to protect themselves and their families, or to participate in long-standing sporting traditions, are left with fewer lawful options, while criminals who acquire firearms through theft, black-market transactions, or other illegal means remain unaffected. New Mexico already struggles with one of the highest violent crime rates in the nation. SB 17 fails to meaningfully target criminals or illegal trafficking networks and instead diverts attention away from proven public safety strategies, such as enforcing existing laws and holding repeat violent offenders accountable.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to reject SB 17 and pursue solutions that address criminal behavior directly rather than penalizing compliant businesses that provide jobs and operate responsibly in our communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carla J. Sonntag".

Carla J. Sonntag  
President & CEO