

Testimony of Art Novotny in OPPOSITION to SB0624

I got interested in building my own firearms too late. I bought one of the “unfinished receiver” kits a few years ago, and was really excited by the possibilities. I saw online what other people were doing and wanted to be inspired...while I realized legislation such as this was also looming (that’s why I say I got into it too late).

Building a functional firearm, even using mostly prefabricated components, is not simple or always successful. Right now, if an irreparable mistake is made somewhere in the process, the simple solution is to salvage the parts that can be reused, dispose of what cannot, and start over with a new blank kit. That would not be so simple if serial numbers and registrations are involved.

The worst part of this bill is the trying to regulate unfinished receivers. The kits, like the one I used, are not considered firearms by the BATF. They are parts, just like the any number of miscellaneous parts or accessories that most collectors have floating around (like car collectors tend to accumulate car parts that are not complete cars). Maybe it will get completed into something someday, maybe it will end up in the trash.

Furthermore, while I have not yet achieved this level of craftsmanship myself, there are others who construct their firearms completely from basic materials, like steel and welding rods from Home Depot. How or when does flat bar stock from Home Depot need to be serialized and registered before it is made into a firearm? I live and work on a farm, using metal for equipment repairs that could also be made into into firearms. Items like that just cannot be regulated.

People like my wife and I, collectors who have paid to be vetted by the HQL process, and are certified range safety officers have proven that we are not the type to go out and do bad things with guns. We know we cannot sell or give home built firearms to anyone (prohibited or not). Let us build our own, for ourselves.

I understand that we don’t want prohibited persons gaining access to firearms (homebuilt or otherwise), and I absolutely agree. But this bill will not change anything for prohibited persons. Let us put our legislative efforts into addressing the problems that lead to gun violence. The homebuilt firearm locked in my safe is not the problem.

Thank you for your consideration,
Art Novotny
District 7