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On Behalf Of:  
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Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

The proposed mandate for the Department of State Police to conduct a study on the efficiency of criminal background checks for firearm transfers, as outlined in Senate Bill 243, is deeply problematic. It presents serious issues regarding the prudent allocation of resources, unnecessary duplication of existing efforts, susceptibility to bias, insufficient urgency, and ambiguity in research methodology.

#### Resource Misallocation:

Assigning the State Police, whose primary responsibilities revolve around critical public safety operations, to conduct a lengthy and involved policy study diverts valuable resources from frontline law enforcement. The department is already stretched thin, grappling with extensive public safety obligations. Redirecting their attention and expertise toward research activities, which fall outside their core competencies, risks compromising public safety. Effective resource utilization demands agencies focus on their inherent strengths—law enforcement agencies should enforce laws, not analyze policy effectiveness.

#### Redundancy of Efforts:

Significant research on firearm background checks already exists, covering the effectiveness, gaps, and necessary improvements. Numerous comprehensive studies and analyses from credible sources provide ample data and clear recommendations. Initiating yet another study without leveraging existing insights represents unnecessary duplication, wasting taxpayer funds and delaying practical implementation of proven solutions. It is more logical and fiscally responsible to act on existing recommendations rather than expend resources to confirm already established conclusions.

#### Potential Bias:

Firearm legislation inherently carries political sensitivity and ideological divisions, significantly increasing the risk of bias affecting research outcomes. Entrusting such a critical evaluation to an agency that may be vulnerable to political influence could undermine the objectivity and credibility of the study. Policies grounded in biased findings risk exacerbating divisions, eroding public trust, and ultimately producing ineffective regulations that may neither protect citizens nor respect constitutional rights.

#### Lack of Urgency:

The timeline proposed—delivering findings by 2026, with the act expiring in 2027—lacks the urgency necessary to address potentially critical flaws in the background

check system promptly. If inefficiencies currently exist, deferring action for several years exacerbates existing problems, potentially endangering public safety. Immediate challenges demand immediate solutions; delayed reports and expiring legislation do little but perpetuate existing shortcomings.

#### Ambiguous Methodology:

Senate Bill 243 provides insufficient detail regarding the methodological rigor of the proposed study, raising significant doubts about its capacity to produce actionable insights. Without clear guidelines, robust analytical frameworks, and transparent processes, the study risks generating inconclusive or ambiguous outcomes. Legislative bodies rely on precise, methodologically sound research to inform effective policy-making. Vague methodologies lead to uncertain conclusions, obstructing meaningful policy decisions.

In conclusion, while Senate Bill 243 ostensibly aims to enhance public safety through an examination of background check efficiencies, its execution could create more problems than it solves. The proposal misdirects critical resources, redundantly replicates existing studies, risks politically driven biases, fails to demonstrate appropriate urgency, and lacks essential methodological clarity. Consequently, Senate Bill 243 may ultimately undermine, rather than enhance, the effectiveness and fairness of firearm transfer regulations.