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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB697

Senate Bill 697's prohibition on firearm possession for adults under 21 conflicts with constitutional rights and practical realities. Federal courts have affirmed Second Amendment protections for adults aged 18–20, yet SB 697 criminalizes their possession of most firearms—excluding only limited categories like bolt-action rifles or shotguns. This directly impacts young adults engaged in hunting, sport shooting (e.g., trap shooting), or self-defense, while exempting military personnel under 21.

The bill's inequity is stark: an 18-year-old serving in the military can legally possess firearms, but their civilian peers face severe penalties (up to 364 days' imprisonment and \$6,250 fines) for mere possession. This creates a two-tiered system that prioritizes state-sanctioned roles over civilian rights. Meanwhile, criminals under 21 will continue accessing firearms illegally, rendering the bill ineffective against violence.

SB 697 undermines constitutional principles and ignores practical needs. Instead of restricting responsible young adults, lawmakers should focus on prosecuting illegal trafficking and enforcing existing laws.