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**MIGUEL SANTIAGO**  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FIFTY-THIRD DISTRICT

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HOMELESSNESS

April 13, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Suspension of Firearm and Ammunition Sales during the COVID-19 State of Emergency**

Dear Governor Newsom,

Thank you for the work that you and your administration have been doing to face down the COVID-19 pandemic. I am writing today to urge you to enact a statewide suspension of firearm and ammunition sales, with an exception for law enforcement and authorized peace officers.

COVID-19 has incited a wave of panic across the nation. We see this in the panic-buying of household items, cleaning supplies, personal protective gear, and now, firearms and ammunition. Firearm and ammunition sales have surged exponentially in the last 30 days with some retailers claiming an increase of 70 percent in the 11 days following Italy's reported outbreak of COVID-19 cases. While personal safety is extremely important during these challenges times, so is public safety. According to the Department of Justice, approximately 22,424 firearms are still in the hands of prohibited persons in California. Public safety amidst a public health crisis must continue to be our shared priority.

Adding more firearms to our current state of affairs perpetuates the cycle of public panic and impulsive action. An increased population of firearms in our state not only poses a greater risk to children and families who are largely confined to their homes, but also to our communities facing racially motivated or otherwise targeted hate. The people of California are grappling with a new reality brought on by COVID-19 and we have a responsibility to respond to our state's need for confidence and certainty. By suspending firearm and ammunition sales and arming Californians with strong safeguards on public health and safety reinforced by state peace officers, we can mitigate undue risks to our public.

Once again, thank you for your proactive leadership during these trying times. Your tireless efforts and continued action are saving millions of Californians and benefiting Americans across the nation.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (916) 319-2053.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Miguel Santiago".

**MIGUEL SANTIAGO**  
Assembly Member, 53<sup>rd</sup> District

MS: ng