

County of Monterey



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May 15, 2023

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Alex Padilla
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: **S. 494, the Background Check Expansion Act – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Feinstein and Senator Padilla:

On behalf of the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors, I write to express our support for S. 494, the Background Check Expansion Act. This important bill would establish background check requirements for gun sales between private parties, prohibiting transfers unless a licensed gun dealer, manufacturer or importer first takes possession of the firearm to conduct a background check.

Monterey County residents are adversely impacted by gun violence that results in an average of fifty deaths every year, half of whom are youth homicide victims aged 10-24 years old, and over a hundred life threatening gunshot injuries that require trauma-level hospital care. The County is committed to supporting efforts to close gaps in the current patchwork of regulation, including those gaps that enable felons, people convicted of domestic violence, children, those found to be a danger to themselves or others, and other prohibited persons to access firearms and ammunition, and those that allow the trafficking of illegal guns.

The Background Check Expansion Act would ensure that individuals prohibited from gun possession under federal law are not able to obtain firearms. The bill would require a background check for every gun sale or transfer, with exceptions such as gifts to family members and temporary transfers for purposes such as hunting, target shooting, and self-defense. Federal law already requires licensed gun dealers to conduct background checks on gun purchasers or transferees. This bill extends the requirement of background checks to unlicensed gun sellers. Under this bill, unlicensed gun sellers would meet their buyers at a licensed gun dealer, who would run a background check using the same process already used for sales from their own inventory.

We appreciate your support of the County of Monterey, and thank you both for cosponsoring S. 494, the Background Check Expansion Act.

Sincerely,

Luis A. Alejo, Chair
Board of Supervisors