

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK  
GOVERNOR



MIKE COONEY  
LT. GOVERNOR

May 8, 2017

The Honorable Corey Stapleton  
Secretary of State  
State Capitol  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Secretary Stapleton:

In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto Senate Bill 99 (SB 99) "AN ACT PROHIBITING THE ENFORCEMENT OF A POTENTIAL FEDERAL BAN ON FIREARMS, MAGAZINES, AND AMMUNITION; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

SB 99 prohibits Montana state employees or peace officers from enforcing any federal ban on firearms, magazines or ammunition. It is nearly identical to bills I vetoed during the 2013 and 2015 legislative sessions because those bills put law enforcement officers in the position of violating laws they are sworn to uphold. All Montana public safety officers take an oath upon graduation from the Montana Law Enforcement Academy to "enforce or apply all laws and regulations appropriately, courteously, and responsibly." They also commit to "work in unison with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice." In oppositional testimony, law enforcement officials expressed concerns that SB 99 would subject our law enforcement officers and other public officials to criminal sanctions for upholding the oaths that we ask them to take.

Further, SB 99 is unnecessary. Congress has not taken any action to ban firearms or magazines. I am and always have been a staunch supporter of our second amendment rights. This bill, however, is unnecessary political theater and puts law enforcement in an untenable position.

For these reasons, I veto SB 99.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Bullock".

STEVE BULLOCK  
Governor

cc: Legislative Services Division  
Scott Sales, President of the Senate  
Austin Knudsen, Speaker of the House