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Contact: Lisa Hill, 518-496-2882

SENATOR GEORGE BORRELLO URGES GOVERNOR HOCHUL TO EXEMPT NYS YOUTH TRAP TEAMS FROM NYSNICS

New Executive Law Requiring Background Checks for Ammunition Endangers Teams

ALBANY, NY – Senator George Borrello sent a letter to Gov. Hochul urging her to exempt high school trap shooting teams from a new state law requiring a background check each time ammunition is transferred from a team coach to a student-athlete.

Executive Law 228 is set to take effect Sept. 13. It requires the New York State Police to conduct New York State National Instant Criminal Background Checks (NYSNICS) for all firearm and ammunition purchases or transfers in New York State. The FBI has conducted NICS checks on firearm purchases at no cost to gun buyers since 1998.

High school trap team coaches, registered as “ammunition keepers” with the State Police for their teams, typically buy shotgun ammunition in bulk and then give it to student-athletes during practice and competition. Last week, the coach/ammunition keepers received letters from Gov. Hochul and Acting State Police Superintendent Steven Nigrelli requiring them to register with NYSNICS and establish a method of payment to cover the cost of the background checks. New York State is charging \$9 for each firearm transfer and \$2.50 for each transfer of ammunition.

“This is about protecting a program that is an essential part of hunter and firearm safety education. More than 2,500 student-athletes representing 144 high school clay target teams participate in the NYS High School Clay Target League. Requiring a NICS check each time a coach gives a team member a box of ammunition is ridiculous and unworkable,” Sen. Borrello said. “These teams have a perfect safety record. Not one student has been injured during practice or competition since the league started in 2001. Not one. Think about that.”

All student athletes in the NYS High School Clay Target League must complete a firearm safety certification before participation. Team members, most between the ages of 13 and 17, are unable to purchase shotgun ammunition themselves. They participate on the teams with a signed permission slip from their parent/guardian.

Executive Law 228 will also affect adult trap, skeet and sporting clays leagues where host conservation and shooting clubs sell ammunition to competitors. All retail firearms dealers and ammunition sellers in New York are also required to comply with the new system.

“Make no mistake about it, Executive Law 228 is designed to punish law-abiding gun owners. It’s another example of egregious government overreach designed to make it more difficult and expensive for law-abiding

gun owners to exercise their Second Amendment rights. It will do nothing to reduce crime and it furthers government overreach,” Sen. Borrello said. “It also wastes taxpayer money by forcing the New York State Police to act as middlemen, adding a layer of bureaucracy between federally licensed gun dealers and the FBI, which has been conducting NICS checks for decades at no cost to gun buyers.”

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