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Bills to ban Cow Palace gun shows, extend bar hours vetoed by Brown

[Melody Gutierrez](#), Sep. 28, 2018

SACRAMENTO — Bills to ban gun shows at the Cow Palace and allow San Francisco and Oakland to let bars stay open until 4 a.m. — both promoted by state Sen. Scott Wiener as ways to give local officials more control — were vetoed Friday by Gov. Jerry Brown.

Wiener, D-San Francisco, said he was disappointed with the double rebuke and would try again on both measures next year when the termed-out governor is no longer in office.

The vetoes weren't the first time Brown has expressed his disapproval of the proposals — he's vetoed similar versions of both bills in past years.

Wiener was also the author of the previous bill to extend last calls for alcohol at nightclubs and bars an extra two hours, until 4 a.m. This year's version would have allowed San Francisco, Oakland and seven other cities to participate in a five-year pilot program, starting in 2021.

Brown didn't disguise his contempt for the idea in his veto message.

“Without question, these two extra hours will result in more drinking,” the governor wrote. “The businesses and cities in support of this bill see that as a good source of revenue. The California Highway Patrol, however, believes strongly that this increased drinking will lead to more drunk driving.”

He added, “I believe we have enough mischief between midnight and 2 without adding two more hours of mayhem.”

It was an argument also advanced by advocacy groups Alcohol Justice and California Alcohol Policy Alliance. They said extending bar hours would put more late-night drinkers on the road with early morning commuters, inevitably leading to more drunken-driving accidents and deaths.

Wiener's SB905 would have allowed cities in the pilot program to tailor the added hours in any fashion, including limiting them to certain days or neighborhoods. Besides San Francisco and Oakland, the cities were Sacramento, Los Angeles, Long Beach, West Hollywood, Palm Springs, and the Riverside County cities of Cathedral City and Coachella.

Wiener argued that “California's one-size-fits-all closing time doesn't make sense. When it comes to nightlife you can't compare downtown Los Angeles or San Francisco to small towns.”

In a statement, he added, “We are forcing all of our cities to conform to the same closing time regardless of the varying needs and wants of the local community. ... It is a shame that we will continue to stifle our nightlife economy, but I remain committed to modernizing these outdated laws.”

Wiener's Cow Palace bill was the fourth attempt by lawmakers in recent years to ban gun and ammunition sales at the state-owned exhibition hall in Daly City. The most recent was in 2013, when Brown vetoed a bill by then-Sen. Mark Leno, D-San Francisco.

The Cow Palace hosts five gun shows a year. Under Wiener's SB221, those would have been prohibited beginning in 2020.

Opponents argued that banning gun shows would result in more than \$730,000 in lost revenue to the Cow Palace in lease, parking and related fees, as well as an annual loss of more than \$600,000 in sales tax revenue.

"The decision on what kind of shows occur at the Cow Palace rests with the local board of directors which, incidentally, represents a broad cross section of the community," Brown wrote in his veto message. "They are in the best position to make these decisions."

Wiener said the Cow Palace board has "stubbornly ignored" requests from the community that the gun shows halt.

"I'm deeply disappointed," Wiener said. "While I have tremendous respect for the governor, I respectfully disagree with his decision. This issue isn't going away."

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