

1 Rew R. Goodenow, Esq.  
Nevada Bar No. 3722  
2 PARSONS BEHLE & LATIMER  
3 50 W. Liberty Street, Suite 750  
Reno, Nevada 89501  
4 Telephone: (775) 323-1601  
Facsimile: (775) 348-7250  
5 RGoodenow@parsonsbehle.com  
Attorneys for Plaintiffs Don Turner,  
6 Vicki Kawelmacher, Larry Rowe,  
7 Ron Sims, Douglas Russell Bacon, Jr.,  
Omar Forbes

REC'D & FILED  
2014 JUL 14 PM 4 54  
ALAN GLOVER  
BY [Signature] CLERK  
DEPUTY

8  
9 IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA  
10 IN AND FOR CARSON CITY

11 DON TURNER, an individual; VICKI  
12 KAWELMACHER, an individual; LARRY  
13 ROWE, an individual; RON SIMS, an  
individual; DOUGLAS RUSSEL BACON JR.,  
14 an individual, OMAR FORBES, a Permanent  
Resident Alien from the Commonwealth of the  
Bahamas,  
15 Plaintiffs,  
16 v.  
17 NEVADANS FOR BACKGROUND  
18 CHECKS,  
19 Defendant.

Case No. 1400 00147 1B  
Dept. No. II

(Exempt From Arbitration Due To Equitable Relief Sought NAR 3(A))

20 **COMPLAINT**  
21 **(NRS 295.061)**

22 COMES NOW, Plaintiffs Don Turner, Vicki Kawelmacher; Douglas Russell Bacon, Jr.,  
23 Larry Rowe, Ron Sims, and Omar Forbes ("Plaintiffs") herein, and for their complaint against  
24 Defendant Nevadans for Background Checks ("Defendant"), hereby allege as follows:

- 25 1. Plaintiffs file this Complaint for the purpose of challenging the description of the  
26 effect of the Background Check Initiative. Petition filed on June 20, 2014 attached hereto as  
27 Exhibit "1" ("Petition"), pursuant to NRS 295.061 (1).

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- 2. Plaintiff Don Turner is a resident of the state of Nevada.
- 3. Plaintiff Vicki Kawelmacher is a resident of the state of Nevada.
- 4. Plaintiff Larry Rowe is a resident of the state of Nevada.
- 5. Plaintiff Ron Sims is a resident of the state of Nevada.
- 6. Plaintiff Douglas Russel Bacon Jr. is a resident of the state of Nevada.
- 7. Plaintiff Omar Forbes is a permanent resident alien from the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, residing in Nevada.

8. On information and belief, Defendant is a political action committee registered with the State of Nevada on June 20, 2014.

**GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

9. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference and reassert the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 8 hereof.

10. Jurisdiction and venue in this court are mandated by NRS 295.061 (1), which provides, in pertinent part, that "... the description of the effect of an initiative or referendum required, pursuant to NRS 295.009, may be challenged by filing a complaint in the First Judicial District Court . . . ."

11. NRS 295.009 (1)(b) provides, in pertinent part, that "...[e]ach petition for initiative ... must ... [s]et forth ... a description of the effect of the initiative ... if the initiative ... is approved by the voters."

12. Plaintiffs do not challenge either the Petition's length or its format in this Complaint.

13. At this time, Plaintiffs challenge only the accuracy of the description of effect contained in the petition. Plaintiffs may challenge the Petition on other grounds, when and if a cause to do so is ripe.

1           14.     The only means of assessing a description’s accuracy is through a court challenge.  
2 Educ. Initiative PAC v. Comm. to Protect Nev. Jobs, 129 Nev. Adv. Op. 5, 293 P. 3d 874, 88  
3 (2013).

4           15.     The Nevada Supreme Court instructed that when reviewing a description of effect,  
5 the district court must take a holistic approach to determine whether the description is a  
6 straightforward, succinct, and nonargumentative summary of an initiative’s purpose and whether  
7 that purpose has been achieved. Id. at 883.

8           16.     The Petition’s Description of Effect (“Description of Effect”) is not accurate. The  
9 following problems with the Description of Effect must be corrected before the Defendants  
10 circulate the Petition, or voters will be misled:

- 11                   a.     delete the reference to “loophole” in the second sentence;
- 12                   b.     state that the current statute governing private party firearm transfers will  
13 be changed from the current voluntary ability to obtain a background check to a mandatory  
14 requirement;
- 15                   c.     remove argumentative language; and
- 16                   d.     state that violation of the new statute can result in criminal penalties, up to  
17 category C felony.

18           17.     The current wording of NRS 202.254, which Defendants seek to delete, reads “[a]  
19 private person who wishes to<sup>1</sup> transfer a firearm to another person may, before transferring the  
20 firearm, request that the Central Repository for Nevada Records of Criminal History perform a  
21 background check on the person who wishes to acquire the firearm.” Defendants seek to delete  
22 the aforementioned language and replace it with mandatory language. See Petition Sec. 5.

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27 <sup>1</sup> The Petition contains a typographical error. It omits the word “to,” which is found in the statute,  
28 as codified. This error is not substantive.

1           18.     During 2013, Nevada’s legislature considered several proposals similar to the  
2     Petition and rejected them and Governor Sandoval vetoed a bill containing similar language. See  
3     SB 396, and AB 234, and SB 221, 2013 Regular Session of the Nevada Legislature.

4           19.     The Description of Effect characterizes current law that allows for law abiding  
5     private party transfers without background checks as a “loophole.” That description  
6     misrepresents the facts. A “loophole” is an ambiguity or omission in the text through which the  
7     intent of a statute may be evaded. The current text of the law is clear and voluntarily. The  
8     legislature directly considered the text during its most recent legislative session. Therefore, to  
9     refer to the law’s failure to mandate background checks for private party transactions would  
10    mislead voters into thinking that the legislature intended to make mandatory background checks  
11    the law, but somehow erred and failed to accomplish their objective. Voters may well believe  
12    they are just fixing a grammatical mistake. This problem can be repaired by removing the words  
13    “[h]owever, due to a loophole in the law.”  
14    “[h]owever, due to a loophole in the law.”  
15

16           20.     The Petition’s language is also argumentative, tending to minimize the Petition’s  
17    significance.

18           21.     The aforementioned eight words, “[h]owever, due to a loophole in the law,” should  
19    be replaced by language informing the voters that approval of the Petition changes voluntary  
20    background checks between law abiding citizens to mandatory.

21           22.     The Description of Effect contains other argumentative language. The Nevada  
22    Supreme Court has declared “that a description of effect must be ‘straightforward, succinct, and  
23    nonargumentative. . ..’” Id. at 879 (quoting Las Vegas Taxpayer Comm. v. City Council, 125  
24    Nev. 165, 183, 208 P. 3d 429, 441 (2009)). The Description of Effect says that “a background  
25    check is not required when a person obtains a gun from an unlicensed seller, making it easier for  
26    felons, domestic abusers, and other dangerous people to buy guns.” It appears that the preceding  
27    28

1 phrase is included for the purpose of arguing for the need to change the law. The Nevada  
2 Supreme Court has stated that “the description of effect does not need to explain ‘hypothetical’  
3 effects of an initiative.” Id. at 879 (quoting Herbst Gaming, Inc. v. Secretary of State, 122 Nev.  
4 877, 889, 141 P.3d 1224, 1232 (2006)). This argumentative language should be deleted.

5  
6 23. The present argumentative language in the Description of Effect should be  
7 replaced with language informing the voters that the new statute imposes criminal penalties up to  
8 a category C felony for its violation, even for sales between law abiding citizens. Currently, the  
9 Description of Effect does not mention that it amends NRS Chapter 202, Crimes Against Public  
10 Health and Safety, nor does it inform the voters that it criminalizes formerly voluntary conduct.  
11 The imposition of new criminal penalties through the initiative process should be preceded by fair  
12 warning to all voting for and against it.

13  
14 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs prays for relief as follows:

- 15 1. That the Court set this matter for hearing within 15 days, as required by NRS  
16 295.061;
- 17 2. That the Court require the Defendant to amend its Petition, and or invalidate the  
18 Petition as currently written; and
- 19 3. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem proper.

20 DATED: July 14, 2014.

PARSONS BEHLE & LATIMER

21 By:   
22 Rew R. Goodenow, Esq.  
23 Attorneys for Plaintiffs

## INDEX OF EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT NO.	DESCRIPTION	PAGES
1	Initiative Petition	8

NEVADA  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**THE BACKGROUND CHECK INITIATIVE**

2019 JUN 20 PM 2 46

Explanation – Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter between brackets [~~omitted material~~] is material to be omitted.

RECEIVED  
LAS VEGAS NV

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**Sec. 1. Short Title.** Sections 1 to 9, inclusive, of this act may be cited as The Background Check Act.

**Sec. 2. Preamble.** The People of Nevada do hereby find and declare that:

1. To promote public safety, federal law currently prohibits felons, domestic abusers, the severely mentally ill, and other dangerous people from buying or possessing firearms;
2. Federally licensed firearms dealers are required to run background checks on their prospective buyers to ensure they are not prohibited from buying or possessing firearms;
3. Criminals and other dangerous people can avoid background checks by buying guns from unlicensed firearms sellers, whom they can easily meet online or at gun shows and who are not legally required to run background checks before selling or transferring firearms;
4. Due to this loophole, millions of guns exchange hands each year in the United States without a background check;
5. The background check process is quick and convenient: Over 90% of federal background checks are completed instantaneously and over 97% of Nevadans live within 10 miles of a licensed gun dealer;
6. We have the right to bear arms, but with rights come responsibilities, including the responsibility to keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons and domestic abusers;
7. To promote public safety and protect our communities, and to create a fair, level playing field for all gun sellers, the people of Nevada find it necessary to more effectively enforce current law prohibiting dangerous persons from purchasing and possessing firearms by requiring background checks on all firearms sales and transfers, with reasonable exceptions, including for immediate family members, hunting, and self-defense.

**Sec. 3.** Chapter 202 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 4 through 7, inclusive, of this act.

**Sec. 4. Definitions.** *As used in NRS 202.254 and sections 5 to 7, inclusive, of this act, unless the context otherwise requires:*

1. ***“Hunting”*** has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 501.050.
2. ***“Licensed dealer”*** means a person who holds a license as a dealer in firearms issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 923(a).

3. ***“National Instant Criminal Background Check System” has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179A.062.***
4. ***“Unlicensed person” means a person who does not hold a license as a dealer, importer, or manufacturer in firearms issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 923(a).***
5. ***“Transferee” means an unlicensed person who wishes or intends to receive a firearm from another unlicensed person.***
6. ***“Transferor” means an unlicensed person who wishes or intends to transfer a firearm to another unlicensed person.***
7. ***“Trapping” has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 501.090.***
8. ***“Central Repository” has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 179A.045.***

Sec. 5. NRS 202.254 is hereby amended to read as follows:

1. ***Except as otherwise provided in section 6 of this act, an unlicensed person shall not sell or transfer a firearm to another unlicensed person unless a licensed dealer first conducts a background check on the buyer or transferee in compliance with this section. [A private person who wishes transfer a firearm to another person may, before transferring the firearm, request that the Central Repository for Nevada Records of Criminal History perform a background check on the person who wishes to acquire the firearm.]***

2. ***The seller or transferor and buyer or transferee shall appear jointly with the firearm and request that a licensed dealer conduct a background check on the buyer or transferee. [The requests the information pursuant to subsection 1 shall provide the Central Repository with identifying information about the person who wishes to acquire the firearm.]***

3. ***A licensed dealer who agrees to conduct a background check pursuant to this section shall take possession of the firearm and comply with all requirements of federal and state law as though the licensed dealer were selling or transferring the firearm from his or her own inventory to the buyer or transferee, including, but not limited to, all recordkeeping requirements, except that:***

***(a) the licensed dealer must contact the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, as described in 18 U.S.C. 922(t), and not the Central Repository, to determine whether the buyer or transferee is eligible to purchase and possess firearms under state and federal law; and***

***(b) the seller or transferor may remove the firearm from the business premises while the background check is being conducted, provided that before the seller or transferor sells or transfers the firearm to the buyer or transferee, the seller or transferor and the buyer or transferee shall return to the licensed dealer who shall again take possession of the firearm prior to the completion of the sale or transfer.***

***[Upon receiving a request from a private person pursuant to subsection 1 and the identifying information required pursuant to subsection 1, the Central Repository shall within 5 business days after receiving the request:***

***(a) Perform a background check on the person who wishes to acquire the firearm, ; and***

***(b) Notify the person who requests the information whether the information available to the Central Repository indicates that the receipt of a firearm by the person who wishes to acquire the firearm would violate a state or federal law.]***

4. ***A licensed dealer who agrees to conduct a background check pursuant to this section shall inform the seller or transferor and the buyer or transferee of the response from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. If the response indicates that the buyer or transferee is***



*ineligible to purchase or possess the firearm, the licensed dealer shall return the firearm to the seller or transferor and the seller or transferor shall not sell or transfer the firearm to the buyer or transferee. [If the person who requests the information does not receive notification from the Central Repository regarding the request within 5 business days after making the request, the person may presume that the receipt of a firearm by the person who wishes to acquire the firearm would not violate a state or federal law.]*

*5. [The Central Repository] A licensed dealer may charge a reasonable fee for [performing] conducting a background check and facilitating a firearm sale or transfer between unlicensed persons [and notifying a person of the results of the background check] pursuant to this section.*

*[6. The failure of a person to request the Central Repository to perform a background check pursuant to this section before transferring a firearm to another person does not give rise to any civil cause of action.]*

**Sec. 6. The provisions of NRS 202.254 do not apply to:**

*1. The sale or transfer of a firearm by or to any law enforcement agency and, to the extent he or she is acting within the course and scope of his or her employment and official duties, any peace officer, security guard entitled to carry a firearm under NAC 648.345, member of the armed forces, or federal official.*

*2. The sale or transfer of an antique firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C. §921(16).*

*3. The sale or transfer of a firearm between immediate family members, which for the purposes of this chapter means spouses and domestic partners and any of the following relations, whether by whole or half blood, adoption, or step-relation: parents, children, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.*

*4. The transfer of a firearm to an executor, administrator, trustee, or personal representative of an estate or a trust that occurs by operation of law upon the death of the former owner of the firearm.*

*5. A temporary transfer of a firearm to a person who is not prohibited from buying or possessing firearms under state or federal law if such transfer:*

*(a) is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm; and*

*(b) lasts only as long as immediately necessary to prevent such imminent death or great bodily harm.*

*6. A temporary transfer of a firearm if:*

*(a) the transferor has no reason to believe that the transferee is prohibited from buying or possessing firearms under state or federal law;*

*(b) the transferor has no reason to believe that the transferee will use or intends to use the firearm in the commission of a crime; and*

*(c) such transfer occurs and the transferee's possession of the firearm following the transfer is exclusively:*

*(i) At an established shooting range authorized by the governing body of the jurisdiction in which such range is located;*

*(ii) At a lawful organized competition involving the use of a firearm;*

- (iii) While participating in or practicing for a performance by an organized group that uses firearms as a part of the public performance;*
- (iv) While hunting or trapping if the hunting or trapping is legal in all places where the transferee possesses the firearm and the transferee holds all licenses or permits required for such hunting or trapping; or*
- (v) While in the presence of the transferor.*

**Sec. 7. Penalty.**

**1. An unlicensed person who sells or voluntarily transfers one or more firearms to another unlicensed person in violation of NRS 202.254:**

**(a) For the first conviction involving the sale or transfer of one or more firearms, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor and shall be punished as provided in NRS 193.140; and**

**(b) For the second and subsequent convictions involving the sale or transfer of one or more firearms, is guilty of a category C felony and shall be punished as provided in NRS 193.130(2)(c).**

**Sec. 8. Severability.** If any provision of this act, or the application thereof to any person, thing, or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of this act as a whole or any provision or application of this act which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

**Sec. 9. Effective Date.** This act shall become effective on October 1, 2015 if approved by the legislature, or on January 1, 2017 if approved by the voters.

[The remainder of this page is blank.]

**DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT**

Under current law, federally licensed gun dealers are required to perform criminal and public safety background checks on buyers before transferring guns to them. However, due to a loophole in the law, a background check is not required when a person obtains a gun from an unlicensed seller, making it easier for felons, domestic abusers, and other dangerous people to buy guns. This initiative requires that an unlicensed person who wishes to sell or transfer a firearm to another person conduct the transfer through a federally licensed gun dealer who runs a background check on the potential buyer or transferee. A licensed dealer may charge a reasonable fee for this service. Certain transfers will be exempt from this requirement, including transfers between immediate family members and temporary transfers while hunting and for immediate self-defense. A licensed dealer who agrees to facilitate a transfer must comply with all requirements of state and federal law concerning the transfer of a firearm as though the licensed dealer were selling the firearm from his or her inventory, except that the background check must be run through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System and not the Central Repository for Nevada Records of Criminal History.

County of \_\_\_\_\_

**(Only registered voters of this county may sign below)**

Petition District: \_\_\_\_\_

**(Only registered voters of this petition district may sign below)**

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**AFFIDAVIT OF CIRCULATOR**

(To be signed by circulator in the presence of a notary public)

STATE OF NEVADA )  
 )  
 County of \_\_\_\_\_ )

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (print name), being first duly sworn under penalty of perjury, depose and say: (1) that I reside at \_\_\_\_\_ (print street, city and state); (2) that I am 18 years of age or older; (3) that I personally circulated this document; (4) that all signatures were affixed in my presence; (5) that the number of signatures affixed thereon is \_\_\_\_\_; and (6) that each person who signed had an opportunity before signing to read the full text of the act or resolution on which the initiative or referendum is demanded.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Circulator

Subscribed and sworn to or affirmed before me this

\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2014, by \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Notary Public