



SUPPORT AIR-GUN RECLASSIFICATION PACKAGE

On behalf of the National Rifle Association and the more than 100,000 NRA members who reside in the state of Michigan, I request your support for the Air-Gun Reclassification Package. This important package of bills seeks to achieve pragmatic and much needed reform by redefining the term “firearm” in the Michigan Code to exclude devices that propel a projectile by gas, spring or air. The goal of this Package is to relieve Michiganders, and those seeking to engage in interstate commerce with Michigan residents, from outdated and unduly burdensome restraints on the transfer, purchase and possession of most air guns.

Under current law, a vast majority of air guns—including all pellet guns and air-soft guns—qualify as firearms. As a result, the same restrictions that apply to the transfer, purchase and possession of firearms also apply to air guns; including licensing and registration. Michigan is one of only four¹ states that classify most air guns as firearms.

The Air-Gun Reclassification Package, which includes Senate Bills 964, 965, 966 & 979 and House Bills 5450, 5749 & 5750, would align Michigan’s definition of “firearm” with the federal definition; such that “firearm” would be redefined to mean “any weapon which will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by action of an explosive.” Senate Bill 979 would then create a new definition for air guns. Grouping air guns under the broader term “pneumatic guns,” to account for certain devices that propel projectiles by action of a spring, SB 979 would allow for cities and charter townships to reasonably regulate the use and possession of “pneumatic guns;” with the exception that these devices cannot be regulated on private property where authorization is given and the possessor takes precautionary measures to ensure that the projectile remains within the bounds of the property.

UNDER MICHIGAN LAW, IS IT A FIREARM OR NOT?

	<p>1. <u>Air-Soft Gun</u> – Yes. Air-soft guns qualify as firearms under current Michigan law. Almost all air-soft guns are manufactured to shoot a 6mm BB, which is equivalent to approximately .23 caliber. This exceeds the .177 caliber maximum diameter cited in statute. It would need to be <i>licensed and registered</i>.</p>	
	<p>2. <u>Pump Air Rifle</u> – Yes. This classic air-gun, enjoyed by youth and adults alike, is a firearm under Michigan law. While the gun is manufactured to shoot BBs, it also allows for the shooter to load a single pellet into the chamber. Thus, it is <i>not</i> “designed and manufactured <i>exclusively</i> for propelling...BBs.”</p>	
	<p>3. <u>CO₂ Air Rifle/Pistol</u> – Yes. Most CO₂-powered air-guns are manufactured to shoot pellets, and, therefore, qualify as firearms under Michigan law. As such, the particular device shown in the photograph would also be subject to Michigan’s <i>licensing and registration</i> requirements.</p>	
	<p>4. <u>Spring/Air BB Gun</u> – No. Your classic Red Ryder-style BB gun is the only device on this list that does not qualify as a firearm under Michigan law. Even though the device can hold up to 650 BBs, it is one of the few commercially available pneumatic devices that is “designed and manufactured <i>exclusively</i> for propelling...BBs not exceeding .177 caliber”</p>	

¹ New Jersey, Rhode Island, Michigan, and, to a lesser extent, Illinois are the only states in the U.S. that treat air-guns as firearms.

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Michigan law imposes an unduly burdensome restraint on the transfer, purchase and possession of most air-guns. Under current law, a vast majority of pneumatic guns qualify as firearms. As a result, the same restrictions that apply to the transfer, purchase and possession of firearms also apply to these devices. Compared to the surrounding jurisdictions, and all but two states, Michigan's treatment of pneumatic guns is excessively restrictive.

