



## **UPDATE TO OUR MEMBERS ON THE FIREARMS CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL**

Tuesday 08 June 2021

140 years ago, strict gun control was implemented for the first time in South Africa. This led to what became known as the Gun War of 1880 and 1881. The conflict occurred in the then British territory of Basutoland (present-day Lesotho) in Southern Africa. It was fought between Cape Colony forces and Basotho chiefs over the right of the Basotho people to bear arms. Because of the determination and courage of the Basotho, they won the war and the final settlement favoured them, it also led to the splitting of Basutoland from the Cape Colony. The Basotho kept their firearms.

It seems bizarre that our government would try the same in a country rich in gun ownership history.

It has been 2 weeks since the preamble to the Bill was released. At SAGA we haven't sat idle and have put together a team of experienced professionals, consisting of lawyers, advocates, candidate attorneys and law students. They are all working on submissions for SAGA and we are grateful to them for their hard work.

Currently there is a lot of doom, gloom and negativity surrounding the Bill, and rightfully so. Despite this, as SAGA we would like to ensure our members that we will fight this as hard as we can, using proper facts in our submissions and be constructive and as unemotional as possible. We encourage our members and the public to submit meaningful submissions that will make an impact and serve the fight well.

The fight is most certainly not lost, and we are at the very beginning stages of a long process. We would like to take this opportunity to explain the process to you.

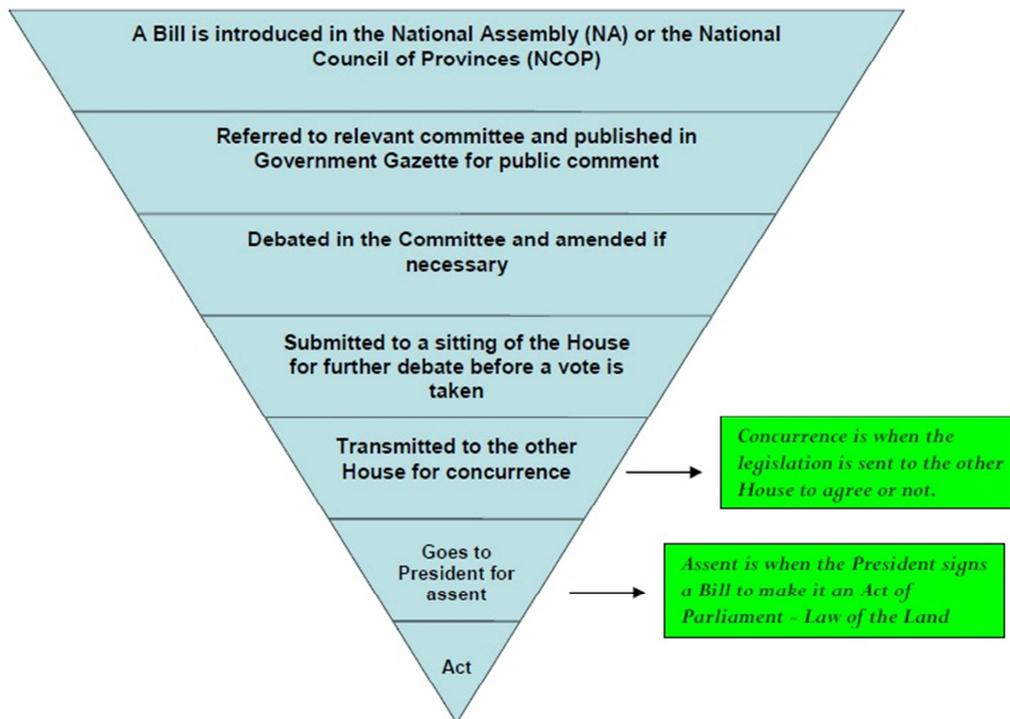
A Bill is a draft version of a law. Most Bills are drawn up by a government department, in this instance the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service, under direction of the relevant minister or deputy minister. This kind of Bill must be approved by the Cabinet before being submitted to Parliament.

The State Law Advisors are supposed to certify a Bill as being consistent with the Constitution and properly drafted.

Before a Bill can become a law, it must be considered by both Houses of Parliament i.e. the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). It is published in the Government Gazette for public comment (where we sit now), and is then referred to the Portfolio Committee on Police. It is debated in the committee and amended if necessary. If the Bill passes through both the NA and the NCOP, it goes to the President for assent (signed into law). Once it is signed by the President, it becomes an Act of Parliament and a law of the land. This is the process if the Bill isn't scrapped at some period in the process.

Below is a diagram that simplifies the entire process.

**Diagram of How a Law is made in South Africa**



SAGA is passionate about the right of free and responsible citizens to choose to own a firearm for lawful reasons. We are passionate about ensuring that peoples' rights are protected wherever possible. A big part of SAGA's vision is that law-abiding citizens should be free to choose if they want to own a firearm or not. We want our members to be secure in the knowledge that we hold their best interests at heart, and we will not compromise on this.

We ask for our members' support and encourage them to recruit at least one new SAGA member.

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page: [facebook.com/GunLobbySAGA](https://facebook.com/GunLobbySAGA) for more information on what being a member entails and what benefits you receive.

Issued by:

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