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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
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March 25, 2003

AB 328, Submission to Voters, the question of whether the legislature should direct the State Fire Marshal's Office to regulate the sale and use of fireworks...

The Division of State Fire Marshal's Office supports AB 328 and believes that it is proper to let the people of the State of Nevada decide if the sale and use of fireworks should be regulated statewide.

According to the National Fire Protection Agency, in 1998, there were an estimated 21,700 fires involving fireworks, as reported to fire departments. There was \$15.6 million in direct property damage as a result of these fires. Fireworks related fires have typically caused at least \$20 million in property loss each year in the past decade.

On a typical 4th of July, fireworks cause more fires in the United States than all other causes combined. But, because most people encounter the risk of fireworks once a year, most Americans do not realize how great the risk is.

The National Fire Protection Association also reports that the number of injuries associated with the "amateur use of fireworks" continues to rise. In 2000, fireworks injuries reported to hospital emergency rooms rose 29% from 1999, to 8,500 injuries. Without discussing further details, the figures underscore the fact that the risk of fireworks use- measured as a rate of serious injuries per hour of exposure- ranks with the highest risks of any known product. Meantime, injuries associated with public displays remain low...indicating that fireworks are best handled by professionals, whose shows are spectacular but safe.

The State Fire Marshal's Office currently regulates "display" or commercial fireworks and storage, but specifically exempts fireworks designated as "consumer" or the old "Class C" designation of fireworks (except for storage). If tasked with the development of regulation, public hearings and the administrative code process would decide the extent of regulation.

In short, we support the ballot question that would allow the voter to decide if the State Fire Marshal's Office should adopt regulations to regulate the sale and use of fireworks in all counties of this state.

Note: Currently, 32 states plus the District of Columbia allow some or all types of consumer fireworks, approved by enforcing authority, or as specified by law. 6 states allow only sparklers and/or other novelties. All consumer fireworks are banned in 10 states. Only 1 state has no consumer fireworks laws except at the county level...Nevada.