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**Dennis J. Reese Testimony
House Judicial Criminal Committee
Hearing on SB 1657
May 16, 2017**

Note: This statement was prepared for this hearing but not delivered as Mr. Reese was not selected to testify.

- Hello, my name is Dennis Reese. I am owner and CEO of Springfield Armory, a firearm manufacturer in Geneseo, Illinois. Our company has called Illinois home for more than four decades.
- I want to thank Chairman Simms, and fellow members of this House Judiciary Criminal Committee for the opportunity to speak to you today about Senate Bill 1657.
- With 250 employees, Springfield Armory is one of the largest employers in Henry County.
- And we are just one of many companies in Illinois that manufacture, distribute and sell firearms, ammunition and hunting equipment. Together, we employ nearly 5,000 people across the state and generate an additional 6,100 jobs in supplier and ancillary industries.
- These are solid, good paying jobs that provide meaningful employment at a time in our state where every single job matters.
- Not only is our industry a significant job creator, we benefit the economy as a whole by contributing nearly \$130 million in tax revenues and generating as much as \$2.18 billion in total economic activity for the state of Illinois.
- We at Springfield Armory have grave concerns about Senate Bill 1657, known as the Gun Dealer Licensing legislation.

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- Passage of SB 1657 would create onerous mandatory regulations, potential fees in the thousands of dollars and excessive amounts of red tape that would assuredly cause many firearm dealers to close their doors and prevent prospective owners from opening new ones.
- We believe the legislation would also be duplicative as the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives already licenses and closely monitors all federally licensed firearm dealers and strictly enforces federal law.
- Simply put, this bill is just another in a long line of attempts to infringe on rights guaranteed to American citizens by the Second Amendment and I have fought to uphold Second Amendment rights my entire adult life.
- Dealer closings resulting from this legislation would limit our product availability to FOID card holding customers. This would negatively impact our federally regulated, and decades-old supply chains, and even worse - would put an end to numerous local businesses and cut hundreds of jobs.
- As you may know, our former trade association IFMA worked with members of the committee to exempt manufacturers from this legislation. This was done without my prior knowledge and goes against my own and my company's principles. Despite that fact, we understand the grave ramifications this bill would have on our Second Amendment rights, and on our industry as a whole, so we are here today to encourage you to vote this legislation down.
- Again, SB 1657 will force small currently compliant Federal Licensed Dealers out of business, will make it difficult for larger dealers to stay in business and will limit our product availability to law abiding citizens. This would negatively affect employees of manufacturers and suppliers across the state.
- In closing, we at Springfield Armory certainly hope that my testimony today will help you and the committee understand our position as an

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employer and manufacturer while considering our concerns regarding this attack on our Second Amendment rights, and the negative impact on our supply chain and our employees and retirees.

- Thank you Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony.

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