

# Gov. Pritzker signs SB 337, requiring state certification for gun dealers

January 17 2019 10:09 AM



CHICAGO — Surrounded by gun violence survivors, prevention advocates, community leaders and elected officials who have worked for years to require licenses for gun dealers, today Governor JB Pritzker signed SB 337 to combat the scourge of illegal gun trafficking, finally making Illinois the 16th state to require gun dealers to be certified by the state after more than a decade of work.

“Gun violence isn’t an issue facing one city, or one region, or one group of people — it affects us all, and I want to thank all those tireless advocates who didn’t rest until our state took commonsense action to prevent gun trafficking,” said Governor JB Pritzker.

“This bipartisan law is a long-overdue step to do more to prevent gun violence, to make sure guns don’t fall into the wrong hands, to make sure that we license gun shops just like restaurant and other businesses, and deter straw purchases, so that we can prevent someone from buying a gun for someone who is not legally allowed to own a gun.”

The gun violence prevention measure is the second bill Gov. Pritzker signed into law since taking office Monday. SB 337 creates two acts that allow the state to regulate gun dealers and gather information on private sales and illegal gun transfers.

The Firearm Dealer License Certification Act requires any gun dealer in the State of Illinois be certified by the Illinois State Police (ISP). State-licensed dealers are required to provide annual training to employees, have video surveillance in gun stores, and be open for inspection by ISP and local law enforcement.

The Gun Trafficking Information Act requires ISP to publish key information related to crime-related firearms and imposes penalties on individuals who fail to maintain a record of a private sale.

With the federal government failing to effectively regulate gun dealers, state licensing will hold gun dealers responsible while the state takes action to reduce the tragic gun violence that affects so many communities.

“Thank you, Governor Pritzker, for taking action to stop the gun violence,” said Delphine Cherry, a mother of two victims of gun violence. “27 years ago today, I lost my daughter Tyesa to gun violence committed by a 14-year-old who had an illegal gun. Twenty years later, my son Tyler was murdered three days before Christmas. Since I lost Tyesa and Tyler to gun violence, I have made it my mission to make sure no other parent has to join the worst club that I belong to: the club of parents who have lost their children to gun violence. This bill will make sure gun dealers are held accountable and stop them from illegally selling guns like the one used to kill my daughter.”

“It only took Governor Pritzker four days - not four years - to realize that if the state can license a barber shop or a liquor store, we can license gun dealers,” said Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “I commend Governor Pritzker for prioritizing this important public safety measure that will reduce the number of illegal guns on our streets and allow the Chicago police to further crack down crime.”

“Gun violence is a complex problem, and no one law will solve it,” said Sen. Don Harmon (D-39th), who sponsored the measure in the Illinois Senate. “But we know that other states that have enacted similar laws to this one have seen a reduction in guns used in crimes. I am grateful to Gov. Pritzker for signing this legislation into law.”

“This bipartisan law will not harm any gun dealer that operates in good faith, but it does ensure accountability for dealers that fail to make efforts to keep guns from falling into the hands of criminals,” said Rep. Kathleen Willis (D-77th), who sponsored the measure in the Illinois House. “I would like to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and Governor Pritzker for their support on this important measure.”

“As one of his first official acts to sign the gun dealer licensing bill, this speaks volumes about the Governor's commitment and passion to help Chicago reduce gun violence,” said Chicago Police Department Superintendent Eddie Johnson. “The tools provided in this legislation to state and local police will significantly help our ability to regulate gun dealers and monitor and interdict the illegal flow of guns into cities like Chicago.”

“Gun violence is prevalent in too many neighborhoods and communities throughout the state, my own included. We must take a comprehensive approach to addressing the level of violence in Illinois, and that includes stopping the flow of guns trafficked into Illinois,” said Attorney General Kwame Raoul. “I would like to thank Governor Pritzker for making commonsense licensing one of the first new laws he enacts as governor.”

“In 2018, the most prosecuted offense by the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office was the unlawful use of a weapon,” said Cook County State’s Attorney Kim Foxx. “It is past time that we do more to keep illegal firearms off of our streets and today’s signing of SB 337 is a step in the right direction. I look forward to a continued partnership with the Illinois General Assembly and Governor Pritzker on sensible legislation to make Cook County safer.”

“It's time to consider our moral obligation to our communities,” said Broadview Mayor Katrina Thompson. “Our highest priority must be keeping our children free of gun violence. Senate Bill 337 puts that extra layer of protection in place to keep us all safe.”