

# **St. Louis City, County Sue to Block New State Law That Nullifies Federal Gun Laws, Ties Hands of Law Enforcement**

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ST. LOUIS - Today, St. Louis City and St. Louis County filed a joint lawsuit seeking to block a new law which makes Missouri a sanctuary state for gun violence by preventing local law enforcement from following federal gun laws. Filed in Cole County Circuit Court, today's lawsuit asks the court to declare the new law unconstitutional under the federal and state constitutions.

Missouri has some of the weakest gun regulations in the country and one of the highest rates of gun violence deaths per capita. But the state legislature passed HB 85 in an effort to prevent enforcement of federal gun laws in Missouri. The new law has already disrupted law enforcement at the federal, state, and local levels:

? The United States Department of Justice declared that the new law unconstitutionally interferes with federal law enforcement and threatens the ability of local police departments to access federal grants.

? The State of Missouri withdrew its prosecutors from assisting in federal drug, carjacking, and gun cases in St. Louis.

? A police chief in the St. Louis region resigned after Governor Parson signed the bill, noting that the new law will “chill the legitimate peacekeeping duties of police.”

“2020 was the deadliest year of gun violence in our state’s history, and now the Missouri legislature is throwing up barriers to stop police from doing their most important job —preventing and solving violent crime,” said St. Louis Mayor Tishaura O. Jones. “This harmful and unconstitutional law takes away tools our communities need to prevent gun violence. I’m proud to partner with St. Louis County in this effort to protect our region and stop this law.”

“This new law is like the state holding out a sign that says ‘Come Commit Gun Violence Here,’” said St. Louis County Executive Dr. Sam Page. “We can’t expect people to stay in St. Louis or to move their businesses here if we don’t do everything we can to reduce gun violence in the region, but this new law sends the opposite message to our residents and business community.”

The City and County are seeking an injunction of unconstitutional provisions and ultimately for the law to be overturned on constitutional grounds. The entities will jointly argue that HB 85 violates the U.S. Constitution Supremacy Clause, which provides that federal law preempts state law, and also is in contravention of other Missouri law.