

Attorney General Raoul Files Brief Supporting Federal Rule To Help Stop The Flow Of Ghost Guns And Protect Communities

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul, as part of a group of 20 attorneys general, today filed a brief supporting the federal government's efforts to regulate "ghost guns," which are weapons without serial numbers that are untraceable, often made at home and purchased without background checks.

The new federal rule to regulate ghost guns – issued by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) – will require that buyers pass background checks before purchasing weapons parts kits, and that law enforcement officers can trace self-made guns that are later used in a crime.

"Weapons kits allow individuals who should not legally possess firearms to construct their own gun, and those homemade ghost guns are then untraceable when used to commit a violent crime. The ATF's new rule is a significant step in helping law enforcement keep ghost guns out of the hands of criminals," Raoul said. "In Illinois, we have taken a comprehensive approach to addressing gun violence that includes developing a crime gun tracing platform, prosecuting individuals who lie on their FOID card applications and behavioral threat assessment trainings. We also successfully sued to have the license revoked from a manufacturer known to supply firearms to criminals. I appreciate the ATF's partnership and its work to develop a new tool to help states protect communities from gun violence."

Absent federal enforcement, these dangerous weapons have continued to proliferate, including in states that have tried to regulate ghost guns themselves. The ATF's final rule helps curb this problem by serving as a vital backstop to existing state efforts to stem the flow of ghost guns.

The ATF's final rule regulates ghost guns by clarifying critical definitions in the Gun Control Act. Specifically, the final rule makes it clear that weapons parts kits and partially-complete frames or receivers – the building blocks for ghost guns – are "firearms" under the act if they can be readily converted to function as a firearm. In making this sensible clarification, the final rule helps ensure that these kits and partially-complete frames or receivers are subject to the same serialization and background check requirements as conventionally-manufactured guns. This helps close a dangerous loophole in firearms regulation that has enabled people to evade existing gun laws and get their hands on these dangerous weapons.

[The amicus brief](#) filed today builds on Attorney General Raoul's work to address gun violence throughout Illinois. Since taking office, Attorney General Raoul has partnered with the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center to host trainings on behavioral threat assessment that are intended to help prevent mass casualty events in schools, places of worship and other public places. The Attorney General's office has

also worked with local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to increase awareness of Illinois' red flag law and partnered with law enforcement agencies to address gaps in the state's Firearm Owner Identification (FOID) card system. The Attorney General's office supported a law that was signed in 2021 to expand background checks and require the Illinois State Police (ISP) to confiscate firearms from individuals whose FOID cards have been revoked. Raoul's office also prosecutes individuals who lie on FOID card applications, collaborates with local law enforcement to combat gun trafficking and uses the office's jurisdiction to prosecute multi-county gun trafficking offenses.

The Attorney General's office, in collaboration with Everytown for Gun Safety, created a state-of-the-art crime-gun tracing database, Crime Gun Connect. The database, housed at the ISP, collects data related to crime gun tracing performed in the state of Illinois since 2009, and it will serve as an investigative tool accessible only by Illinois law enforcement officials. The Attorney General's office filled in the gap and has conducted law enforcement trainings to increase awareness and usage of the new database. Nationally, Attorney General Raoul successfully partnered with Everytown for Gun Safety and the city of Kansas City to get the federal firearm license of an unscrupulous arms manufacturer revoked.

Joining Attorney General Raoul in filing the brief are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington and Wisconsin.