

Attorney General Raoul Leads Coalition Supporting Pennsylvania Law That Prohibits Concealed Carry By Individuals Under 21

February 28 2024 9:10 AM



CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul today led a coalition of 19 attorneys general filing an amicus brief with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit urging

that court to revisit an opinion striking down a Pennsylvania law prohibiting individuals under the age of 21 from carrying concealed weapons in public and imposing additional restrictions during declared states of emergency.

[In the brief](#), Raoul and the coalition ask the court to review its recent opinion in favor of the plaintiffs in *Lara v. Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police*, a lawsuit challenging a Pennsylvania law that generally restricts the issuance of concealed carry weapons permits to people ages 21 and up. Raoul also led a coalition in [September 2021](#) in the same case defending the Pennsylvania law.

“In order to protect our communities, particularly our youth, from gun violence, states should have the ability to enact reasonable measures like age-based restrictions to keep concealed firearms out of the hands of young people,” Raoul said. “I am committed to defending the ability of states to craft these regulations to ensure dangerous weapons do not fall into the hands of those who will not use them responsibly.”

In the brief, Raoul and the coalition explain that the court’s opinion, if not corrected, will raise questions about the constitutionality of similar statutes in more than 30 other states with age restrictions on firearms access. The coalition explained those statutes are constitutional because they are consistent with our country’s historical tradition, in that states have enacted similar laws for over 150 years. Raoul and the attorneys general argued that the opinion should be reheard because its reasoning, if adopted elsewhere, could threaten the states’ ability to defend and enforce all manner of firearms regulations.

The brief is the most recent step in Attorney General Raoul’s work to address gun violence throughout Illinois and across the nation. The Attorney General’s office created a state-of-the-art crime-gun tracing database for Illinois law enforcement called Crime Gun Connect. Raoul’s office also collaborates with local law enforcement to combat gun trafficking and has used the office’s jurisdiction to prosecute multi-county gun trafficking offenses. Additionally, the Attorney General’s office works with law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to increase awareness of Illinois’ red flag law and to address gaps in Illinois’ firearms licensing system. The office also prosecutes individuals who lie on FOID card applications.

The Attorney General’s office partners with the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) to try to avert violence by hosting trainings for law enforcement officers, educators, religious leaders and other community members that are designed to prevent targeted acts of violence.

Attorney General Raoul has persistently advocated at the federal and state levels to strengthen regulation of 3D-printed guns and ghost guns. Illinois law now prohibits

ghost guns, but the office continues to fight in federal court to help defend a recent rule closing the federal loophole. Meanwhile, the Attorney General's office also defends cases pending in courts across the state challenging Illinois' regulations of firearms. Nationally, Attorney General Raoul successfully filed and resolved a lawsuit to get the federal firearm license of an unscrupulous arms manufacturer revoked.

In addition to supporting law enforcement efforts to keep communities safe from gun violence, the Attorney General's office supports victims' service providers around Illinois that offer trauma-informed services for crime victims and their families. Raoul's Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services Division administers a host of programs and services to assist survivors of violent crime. More information is available on [the Attorney General's website](#).

Joining Raoul in filing the amicus brief are the attorneys general California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington.