



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

GEORGE GASCÓN • District Attorney
SHARON L. WOO • Chief Deputy District Attorney
JOSEPH F. INIGUEZ • Chief of Staff

DANIEL FELIZZATTO • Legislative Advocate
TAMAR TOKAT • Legislative Advocate

June 9, 2022

The Honorable Mike Gipson
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8110
Sacramento, CA 95814

ASSEMBLY BILL 1621 (GIPSON) SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Gipson:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 1621.

In California and nationwide, most guns are purchased by legal gun owners at a licensed gun store. These firearms are marked with a serial number to identify the firearm and the purchaser is required to undergo a background check prior to taking possession of the firearm.

However, individuals who do not possess a traceable firearm or who don't want to undergo the required background check are constructing their own firearms. The proliferation of "ghost guns", which are self-assembled guns and fully functional weapons that do not contain a serial number and thus cannot be traced, are a significant contributing factor to the proliferation of gun violence.

AB 1621 will combat the proliferation of ghost guns in California by restricting the ability to manufacture "ghost guns" by redefining one of the definitions of "firearm" to include a precursor part, redefines "firearm precursor part" and prohibits a person from possessing or manufacturing a firearm precursor part without authorization.

In Los Angeles alone, during just the first half of 2021, police confiscated 863 ghost guns, a 400% increase over the 217 it seized in 2020. That sharp jump suggests that the number of ghost guns on the streets and the seizure of these unserialized weapons will continue to grow. In 2021, ghost guns were linked to 24 murders, eight attempted homicides, and dozens of assaults and armed robberies in Los Angeles.

In addition to the countless cases in which these weapons have been used in individual homicides, the proliferation of ghost guns also applies to mass shootings, with gaps in current law being a heavy culprit. For example, although the sale of a fully automatic AK-47 is illegal in California, building a California-compliant version by purchasing separate gun parts at home is not. This occurred in a recent act of domestic terror on February 28, 2022, in which a Sacramento man, David Mora, used an unregistered homemade semiautomatic rifle-style weapon to kill his three daughters, a chaperone who was supervising his visit with them, and himself, all inside of a local church. Since April of 2021, Mora was under a restraining order that barred him from possessing a firearm, and authorities do not know how or when he obtained the weapon used to commit this tragedy.

1100 K Street, Suite 404
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 442-0668
Fax: (916) 444-8729

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Despite reforms to regulate them, ghost guns continue to be a pervasive hurdle for local governments to further public safety, so much that President Joe Biden, with the U.S. Justice Department, has proposed a national initiative to pursue federal charges against those involved in the trade of such weapons.

AB 1621 provides a comprehensive approach to curbing the continued proliferation of ghost guns in California by prohibiting a person from manufacturing or assembling an unserialized firearm. The bill also explicitly prohibits the possession or transfer of a firearm without a serial number or mark of identification.

AB 1621 would also require any person in possession of an unserialized firearm to apply to the California Department of Justice for a unique mark of identification and to affix that mark to the firearm before July 1, 2023.

Under the provisions of AB 1621 it would still be legal and permissible to build a homemade firearm so long as it is serialized.

The proliferation of “ghost guns” has become a leading public safety problem in California. There is no legal or policy reason for a responsible, law abiding gun owner to own or possess an unserialized “ghost gun”.

Our Office is proud to support AB 1621 to reduce the amount of gun violence and firearm related homicides committed with ghost guns in California.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Daniel Felizzatto in my Sacramento Legislative Office at (916) 442-0668.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gascón', written in a cursive style.

GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney