

August 20, 2021

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO REGULATE GHOST GUNS

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general in urging the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to finalize regulations that would make clear that ghost guns are firearms under federal law. Raoul and the coalition argue that by finalizing regulations, the ATF would dramatically reduce the availability of untraceable crime guns. The regulations would represent a significant step toward addressing the current gun violence epidemic.

The proposed rule, Definition of 'Frame or Receiver' and Identification of Firearms, updates the ATF's interpretations of a "firearm" and "frame or receiver" as used in the Gun Control Act of 1968 to clarify weapon kits and incomplete weapon parts, both of which can be easily converted into functioning guns, are covered by the act. The ATF's current regulations allow for the sale of weapon parts kits and certain weapon parts with no federal oversight, a loophole that certain manufacturers and gun dealers have eagerly exploited to market so-called ghost guns. Ghost guns are weapon kits or partially-complete receivers that can easily be converted into unserialized, operable weapons.

"The availability of ghost guns makes it possible for those who should not be able to purchase guns to get around crucial safety measures such as background checks. Ghost guns also lack serial numbers and identifying markers, making them more difficult for law enforcement to trace when they are used to commit violent crimes," Raoul said. "I urge the ATF to finalize regulations clarify once and for all that ghost guns are firearms under federal law. Doing so will help reduce the availability of these weapons and support states' efforts to protect communities across the country from gun violence."

[In today's comments](#), Raoul and the coalition argue that the ATF's current interpretation of these definitions under the Gun Control Act do not properly enforce the act, therefore contributing to violence in Illinois and across the country. Law enforcement intelligence makes clear that ghost guns are fast becoming the weapon of choice for many groups responsible for neighborhood violence. This is because current regulations allow felons, violent criminals and others who cannot legally purchase a firearm to buy ghost guns. Raoul and the attorneys general assert that that this failure to accurately regulate firearms has provided an opportunity for gun dealers to sell unregulated, dangerous firearms.

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