



CONSENT CALENDAR
June 28, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Taplin (Author), Councilmember Wengraf (Co-Sponsor),
Councilmember Hahn (Co-Sponsor),

Subject: Support for AB 2156 – Firearms: manufacturers

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to Assemblymember Buffy Wicks and the state legislature in support of Assembly Bill 2156, which would prohibit the manufacture of unlicensed firearms and precursor parts, commonly known as “ghost guns.”

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

BACKGROUND

Under existing law, federally licensed firearms manufacturers are prohibited from manufacturing or selling firearms in California without a state license if they manufacture more than 50 firearms in a calendar year. Assembly Bill 2156 would lower the state’s manufacturing threshold for requiring state licensure from 50 firearms per year to 4.

On October 12, 2021, the Berkeley City Council unanimously passed Ordinance 7789-N.S., adding Chapter 13.73 to the Berkeley Municipal Code to prohibit the sale, distribution and possession of nonserialized firearms and precursor parts (“ghost guns”). This law went into full effect on May 28, 2022, after a six-month grace period to enable sufficient notification of the policy change.

Ghost guns are an increasingly dangerous threat to public safety. According to the Berkeley Police Department’s 2021 Year-End Crime and Collision Data Report, 33 of the firearms that BPD seized in 2021 were ghost guns, compared to 6 in 2020 and 8 in 2019.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

None.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Taplin Council District 2 510-981-7120

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

CC:
Senator Nancy Skinner
Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon

RE: Support: AB-2156: Firearms: manufacturers

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The City Council of the City of Berkeley is proud to write in support of your bill, AB-2156, which would lower the annual manufacturing threshold requiring state licensure for firearms manufacturers from 50 to 4. As gun violence and homicides have tragically increased across the country, increasing state oversight over gun manufacturers is an imperative for safeguarding public safety in California.

According to the Berkeley Police Department's 2021 Year-End Crime and Collision Data Report, our police officers recovered a total of 118 firearms in 2021, a 39% increase from the previous year. 33 of those firearms were unserialized "ghost guns," often manufactured from precursor parts that can be easily purchased without any of the responsible licensure that law-abiding gun owners observe. Tragically, gun violence has also increased in Berkeley over the past two years, with shootings already robbing two Berkeleyans of their lives this year.

On October 12, 2021, the Berkeley City Council unanimously passed Ordinance 7789-N.S., adding Chapter 13.73 to the Berkeley Municipal Code to prohibit the sale, distribution and possession of ghost guns. This law went into full effect on May 28, 2022, after a six-month grace period to enable sufficient notification of the policy change. The City of Berkeley has gone to great lengths to use all available powers under its jurisdiction to reduce the proliferation of firearms in our community. The state legislature of California must use its greater powers to enable even greater harm reduction. We are confident that your bill would provide stronger safeguards against the distribution of illegal firearms across California, and we welcome this much-needed change.

Thank you for your time and attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

The Berkeley City Council
2180 Milvia St
Berkeley, CA 94709