



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 9, 2023

Taylor Gonsalves
(916) 319-2071

Assemblymember Rodriguez Introduces Critical Legislation to Help Crack Down on the Ongoing ‘Ghost Gun’ Epidemic

(Sacramento, CA) – Today, Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona) introduced AB 97, which would make the possession of an unserialized firearm or firearm with an altered, removed, or obliterated serial number punishable as a felony offense. These firearms are commonly referred to as “ghost guns,” and many police departments report increases in the number of ghost gun seizures and recoveries.

“The serial numbers on firearms are critical to law enforcement’s ability to prevent and investigate gun violence. Since ghost guns are untraceable, they are especially attractive to criminals, and current law does not provide an adequate deterrent for those in possession. We must increase the current punishment to ensure the safety of our communities,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

As of July 2018, California required residents who assemble their own firearms or possess an unserialized firearm to obtain a unique serial number from the Department of Justice and to inscribe it onto the firearm. One year after the law’s enactment, only 2,214 unserialized firearms were registered in accordance with the law. However, that same year, law enforcement recovered nearly 10,000 of these unserialized firearms.

Many communities have turned to banning ghost guns, including San Diego County and the cities of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Oakland. Unfortunately, these efforts focus on the supply of ghost guns in our communities rather than addressing the firearms currently in one’s possession.

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, law enforcement recovered nearly 10,000 ghost guns in 2019. In 2020, California accounted for more than 60% of all ghost guns seized by the bureau. Unfortunately, law enforcement only expects these numbers to continue increasing at this exponential rate.

“As Chairman of the Emergency Management Committee, I find it of the utmost importance for all Californians to feel safe from gun violence in their everyday lives. As the current deterrence is only causing the number of seizures to increase, we must implement effective change to prevent criminals from possessing ghost guns. AB 97 is a first step in making a change to protect our communities,” **added Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

###

Assemblymember Rodriguez ([Twitter](#)) represents the 53rd Assembly District which includes the cities of Chino, Montclair, Ontario, Pomona, and Upland. He is Chair of the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management.