



Date: September 11, 2023

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Legislation Requiring the DOJ to Report on Arrests for Ghost Gun Possession Heads to the Governor's Desk

(Sacramento, CA) – Today, Assembly Bill (AB) 97, authored by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona), passed the State Legislature and is heading to the Governor. This legislation would require the California Department of Justice (DOJ) to include information on arrests for possessing an unserialized firearm in their annual reporting. Beginning in 2029, AB 97 would require the DOJ to collect the reported information from prosecutors and include data on whether convictions result from a plea or jury.

“Unserialized, untraceable ghost guns pose a major threat to Californians and are often used in committing violent crimes. These ghost guns are being recovered with increased frequency and must be removed from our streets. AB 97 will reveal how often someone is held accountable when a ghost gun is recovered,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

Existing law requires firearms to be inscribed with a unique serial number and prohibits an individual from removing or altering that serial number. Violating these provisions is punishable as a felony under current law. The Department of Justice collects detailed information from local law enforcement agencies on misdemeanor arrests but aggregates arrests for “weapons” in their annual crime report.

The number of recovered ghost guns in California has increased. In 2021, the Los Angeles Police Department reported ghost guns contributed to more than 100 violent crimes, including 24 murders, 8 attempted homicides, and dozens of armed robberies and assaults. In the first half of the year, the Department seized 863 ghost guns, a nearly 300% increase from the previous year.

As there is no background check process for ghost guns and they are unserialized, law enforcement cannot contact the manufacturer, distributor, importer, and retailer to learn who purchased a firearm and their connection to a potential crime. Anyone with a ghost gun is evading the law, and if that weapon is used to harm others, it can add complications to solving the crime.

“Considering the DOJ aggregates arrests for ‘weapons’ in their annual report, this overarching category is too broad to obtain an accurate picture of the proliferation of ghost guns in our State. AB 97 will update reporting requirements to provide policymakers with the true reality of this issue so that appropriate methods to address such can be implemented,” **added Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

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Assemblymember Rodriguez ([Linktree](#)) 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.