

Legislation Text

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Calling on the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and the Pennsylvania State Senate to pass HB776 prohibiting untraceable firearms and HB777 banning “ghost gun” parts.

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Police Department has seen a stark increase in the amount of “ghost guns” on the streets in recent years; nearly one in 10 guns seized by police are homemade. This is due to gaps in Pennsylvania law that still allow the sale of such weapons without any oversight; and

WHEREAS, “Ghost guns” are untraceable and unserialized weapons that can be bought online, usually as kits, and assembled at home; and

WHEREAS, These gun kits can be purchased by virtually anyone, including underage individuals, prohibited purchasers, domestic abusers, gun traffickers, and other dangerous individuals. No background check is necessary to acquire a ghost gun; and

WHEREAS, The lack of regulation of ghost guns undermine gun regulations in Pennsylvania that has been enforced to fight against the gun violence crisis; and

WHEREAS, President Joe Biden took executive action in August 2022, implementing a rule requiring a background check for those who want to purchase a kit. Additionally, those selling the kits would be required to include a serial number on all of the components, so that the completed firearm can be traced; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 776, introduced by Representative Morgan Cephas and Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, closes the loopholes in Pennsylvania law that allow the sale and distribution of ghost guns without serial numbers; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 777, introduced by Representative Morgan Cephas, declares 3-D printed firearms illegal. These deadly weapons are undetectable by traditional security measures and untraceable due to the absence of serial numbers. While different than ghost guns, 3-D printed guns pose a similar danger and also need to be regulated; and

WHEREAS, A number of states, including New Jersey and Connecticut, have passed laws that combat ghost guns; and

WHEREAS, Banning ghost guns and other undetectable firearms is the first step to keeping Pennsylvania and Philadelphia safe, reduce gun violence, and lower violent crime rates. This Council body urges their passage by the General Assembly and their approval by Governor Josh Shapiro; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That is hereby calls on the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and the Pennsylvania State Senate to pass HB776 prohibiting untraceable firearms and HB777 banning “ghost gun” parts.