



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Department of Justice Announces Second Amendment Pattern-or- Practice Investigation into California's Los Angeles County

Thursday, March 27, 2025

For Immediate Release

Office of Public Affairs

Protecting the Second Amendment rights of ordinary, law-abiding Americans is a high priority for this Administration.

As part of a broader review of restrictive firearms-related laws in California and other States, the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division today announced an investigation into the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to determine whether it is engaging in a pattern or practice of depriving ordinary, law-abiding Californians of their Second Amendment rights. A recent federal court decision found that "the law and facts [we]re clearly in ... favor" of two private plaintiffs who challenged the lengthy eighteen-month delays that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department had imposed when processing their concealed handgun license applications. And the Civil Rights Division has reason to believe that those two plaintiffs are not the only residents of Los Angeles County experiencing similarly long delays that are unduly burdening, or effectively denying, the Second Amendment rights of the people of Los Angeles.

The Supreme Court has repeatedly recognized that the Second Amendment is not "a

second-class right.” And over the past two decades, the Supreme Court has recognized that the Second Amendment is a fundamental, individual constitutional right and has taken multiple opportunities to strengthen Second Amendment protections for ordinary, law-abiding citizens.

Some States and localities, however, have resisted this recent pro-Second Amendment caselaw. And California has been a particularly egregious offender. In response to recent Supreme Court caselaw, California enacted new legislation to further restrict the ability of ordinary, law-abiding Californians to keep and bear arms. And many California localities appear to be imposing additional burdens beyond those required by California state law, including by subjecting ordinary, law-abiding Californians to expensive fees and lengthy wait times associated with applications for concealed handgun licenses.

“This Department of Justice will not stand idly by while States and localities infringe on the Second Amendment rights of ordinary, law-abiding Americans,” said Attorney General Pamela Bondi. “The Second Amendment is not a second-class right, and under my watch, the Department will actively enforce the Second Amendment just like it actively enforces other fundamental constitutional rights.”

Attorney General Bondi hopes that states and localities will voluntarily embrace their duty to protect the Second Amendment rights of their citizens. But if necessary, today’s announcement will be the first of many similar investigations, lawsuits, or other actions involving other localities in California, the State of California itself, and any other states or localities that insist on unduly burdening, or effectively denying, the Second Amendment rights of their ordinary, law-abiding citizens.

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