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City Attorney Klein Asks Ohio Supreme Court to Take Up Case to Determine Future of Local Gun Safety Laws

City asks Court to weigh in on ability of cities like Columbus to enact and enforce reasonable, commonsense gun safety measures through home rule powers

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced his office has asked the Ohio Supreme Court to take up the issue of the ability of cities to enact and enforce reasonable gun laws like safe storage and other measures to reduce gun violence and protect public safety. In a filing submitted to the Supreme Court, the City contends that because state lawmakers have rescinded nearly all firearm regulations, the City is lawfully permitted to take reasonable action to promote responsible gun ownership to keep kids and communities safe.

“Our city, like many others across the state, is besieged with a devastating gun problem,” said **Columbus Mayor Andrew J. Ginther**. “Residents demand safer neighborhoods to live in and raise their kids, but time and again, the state rescinds our commonsense gun safety measures. The ability to enact and enforce these measures is long past due.”

In recent months, the City has faced several court challenges to its local gun ordinances, including limits placed on high capacity magazines typically used in mass shootings, requirements for individuals to lock up their firearms around children, and a measure to make it easier to prosecute those who sell firearms to individuals prohibited from possessing firearms due to a history of violent crime, domestic abuse or other disqualifying reasons.

“From the start, we’ve said the battle over reasonable gun safety regulations will ultimately go before the Ohio Supreme Court, and we’re hopeful that time has come. Residents in Columbus neighborhoods and in communities across Ohio devastated by gun violence can’t afford to wait any longer for something to change,” said **Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein**. “I truly believe the law is on our side, and the City is hopeful the Court will take up this issue. We will be ready to present a winning case before the Court that affirms our right to take reasonable actions to reduce gun violence in our city.”

In its filing, the City is asking the Court to affirm:

- That the City’s commonsense gun safety measures are constitutional due to the absence of any comprehensive set of state firearm regulations;
- That the City’s gun safety ordinances are constitutional under the Ohio Constitution’s provisions allowing for the reasonable regulation of firearms;
- That an NRA-backed group’s challenge to the City’s gun laws lacks standing to proceed because unnamed plaintiffs in the case refused to disclose their identities;
- That the City can appeal the court decision temporarily blocking local gun ordinances because denial of an appeal in this instance infringes on the City’s right to pass and enforce reasonable laws and ultimately threatens public safety while the law is on hold.

“Home rule gives cities the right to implement safety measures that protect their residents. But the State has tied our hands behind our back,” said **Council President Shannon Hardin**. “Every city, township, and village faces different challenges and it is vital that local municipalities are able to legislate policies that protect our residents from the gun violence that is ravaging our neighborhoods.”

According to recent polling, the vast majority of Ohioans, including gun owners, support reasonable gun safety measures, including 90 percent supporting mandatory background checks, 75 percent supporting safe storage requirements and red flag laws, and over 50 percent supporting limits on high capacity magazines.

With the City’s filing, the opposing party will have the ability to respond before the Ohio Supreme Court decides whether to accept and hear the case. Typically, this process takes between three and six months.