



Testimony in support of  
H.2491/S.1540 An Act Relative to 3D Printed Weapons and Ghost Guns  
Submitted to the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security  
By Jennifer Muroff, LWVMA Legislative Specialist  
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Ghost guns are a dangerous and rising threat to the health and safety of all residents of Massachusetts. Those making them circumvent the firearm licensing and background check process required in the Commonwealth. 3D printed guns and ghost guns, also known as “80% frames and receivers”, are untraceable because they don’t contain serial numbers and are unlicensed and unregulated. This bill classifies 3D printed guns and ghost guns or untraceable firearms without serial numbers as illegal.

The Commonwealth prides itself as a national model of comprehensive gun violence prevention laws. Statistically, we have the lowest gun death rate nationwide. However, ghost guns are an imminent threat here and nationwide. According to the US Department of Justice, between 2016-2020, more than 23,000 un-serialized firearms were recovered by law enforcement from potential crime scenes — including in connection with 325 homicides or attempted homicides. Ghost guns have been seized across the Commonwealth from Winthrop to Fitchburg. On October 28, 2021, two Pittsfield men were arrested for manufacturing ghost guns. A Springfield man was charged with ghost gun firearms trafficking in July and a Marshfield man was sentenced to federal prison for selling ghost guns in Seekonk in 2020. Ask any District Attorney and they will share troubling data and examples.

At the national level, the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) proposed a change to the federal Gun Control Act to officially classify 80% frames and receivers, or ghost guns, as firearms. The federal rules change could potentially be final by the end of the year but will likely face lengthy court challenges. [Attorney General Healey signed onto a public comment letter in conjunction with 17 other Attorneys General urging this rule change.](#)

As is the case on so many pertinent issues, Massachusetts can’t wait for federal action. Nine states currently restrict ghost guns, including California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Washington state, plus the District of Columbia. The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts reasserts our demand for common sense gun safety legislation at the local, state, and federal levels to allow all people to live safely and with confidence in their personal and community security. This right includes people living in communities where systemic racism and disenfranchisement contributes to a near constant threat of gun violence. Curbing gun violence is a critical matter of public safety, public health, and public confidence.

The League of Women Voters believes that the proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to all. The League



supports strong measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.

The League supports licensing procedures for gun ownership by private citizens to include a waiting period for background checks, personal identity verification, gun safety education, and annual license renewal—most of which we have in Massachusetts already. We need to enforce these procedures for ghost guns. We know these measures reduce gun violence nationwide. States with the toughest gun laws have the lowest rates of gun violence. The League supports allocation of resources to better regulate and monitor gun dealers.

The LWVMA, representing 47 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, supports violence prevention programs in all communities and action to support public and private development and coordination of programs that emphasize the primary prevention of violence. The League also supports the active role of government and social institutions in preventing violent behavior and the allocation of public monies in government programs to prevent violence.

For all these reasons, the LWVMA supports this bill and asks that you favorably report this bill out of committee. Thank you for your consideration.