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City Attorney Zach Klein Applauds Judge's Decisions to Uphold Columbus Gun Law, Send Man Charged with Illegal Possession to Jail

Says City's law aimed at keeping firearms out of the hands of convicted criminals is working to keep kids and communities safe

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein released a statement today regarding Franklin County Municipal Court Judge Andrea C. Peeples' decisions both to uphold the City's weapons under disability ordinance and sentence a man convicted under that law to 180 days in jail. The City's weapons under disability law mirrors federal law by prohibiting those with criminal convictions for certain felonies—including drug, weapons, violent or domestic abuse-related offenses—from possessing firearms.

"For federal gun regulations to be effective, they need to be enforced. That's why Columbus stepped up to pass laws to keep deadly weapons out of the hands of violent and dangerous criminals and to put them behind bars when they violate the law," said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein.

"I applaud Judge Peeples for upholding our right to self-governance. We are safer when police and prosecutors have the ability to do their jobs and get illegal guns and criminals off our streets.

"We will continue to stand up for the rights of cities like Columbus to enact and enforce commonsense gun laws to keep our kids and communities safe."

The defendant in the case, Michael Carmichael, is prohibited from possessing firearms due to a prior felony conviction, and was arrested in November 2021 for violating the City's weapons under disability law.

Mr. Carmichael initially attempted to get the case thrown out by challenging the ordinance's enforceability under state law, but Judge Peeples denied the motion, concluding the City's weapons under disability ordinance does not conflict with state law.

The case then went to trial, resulting in a no contest plea by the defendant and a sentence of 180 days in jail and that the defendant's firearm be turned in and destroyed. Mr. Carmichael is set to report to jail June 22.

The decisions come as the City remains engaged in several court cases regarding the City's ability to enact and enforce commonsense gun regulations, including safe storage and other laws aimed at reducing gun violence and keeping deadly weapons out of the hands of dangerous individuals.