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City of Columbus Defends Its Right to Enact and Enforce Safe Storage and Other Gun Laws

City Attorney Klein says the State continues to stand in the way of commonsense laws and the ability for police and prosecutors to do their jobs

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein issued a statement today as the City presented its arguments before the 10th District Court of Appeals in the State of Ohio’s appeal of a [decision by a Franklin County judge](#) to temporarily halt a state law that prohibits cities like Columbus from enacting and enforcing gun safety ordinances.

As a result of the City’s victory in Franklin County in November 2022 that opened the door for legislative action on gun safety, Columbus City Council passed a number of gun safety ordinances in December 2022, including safe storage requirements to keep firearms out of the hands of minors, bans on high capacity magazines commonly used in mass shootings, and a provision to make it easier for police and prosecutors to target illegal guns on the streets.

“Recklessly passing legislation at the Statehouse to pour limitless guns into our streets with no checks and no training has led to chaos and needless death, but the State continues to stand in the way of the ability for cities like Columbus to do anything about it,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“The City of Columbus will continue to defend its right to enact laws that protect public safety, keep our kids and communities safe, and support police and prosecutors to do their jobs to enforce the laws already on the books and keep guns out of the wrong hands.”**

In April 2023, City Attorney Klein [announced the City’s first prosecution](#) under its new safe storage law, which involved a case where a child of the defendant accessed and discharged a firearm owned by the defendant, which nearly struck the child, causing burns and short term hearing loss as another child looked on.

“Safe storage saves lives. We all watched in horror at the video of the young child pulling a firearm from beneath a couch cushion, pointing it toward his head, and pulling the trigger, narrowly missing the child’s face. Because of our safe storage law, that parent is facing the consequences. But now, the State and NRA-backed groups are standing in the way of other children and families faced with the same situation,” added City Attorney Klein.

Enforcement of the City's safe storage law is currently on hold following a flurry of additional lawsuits filed by the State of Ohio and NRA-backed groups challenging the City's gun ordinances. As such, a number of safe storage cases remain uncharged, limiting the ability of police and prosecutors to do their jobs to enforce the law and seek justice for children and families affected by irresponsible gun owners.

“The State’s push for more guns and less oversight has predictably led to more violence and preventable tragedies. The City of Columbus will continue to defend its right to decide what kind of gun safety measures work best for us,” said Columbus Solicitor General Rich Coglianesse, the City’s lead attorney in the case challenging the state’s gun pre-emption laws. **“It’s our hope that the 10th District rules favorably so that police and prosecutors can get back to enforcing the laws and keeping our kids and communities safe.”**

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