



St. Mary's, Hamilton Village

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT PENN

3916 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104 | www.stmarysatpenn.org

Councilmember Jamie Gauthier
City Hall, Room 582,
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Councilmember Jamie Gauthier:

I am writing to you to urge you to advance legislation in the state of Pennsylvania to regulate “ghost guns,” or “privately made firearms.” I live in your district in West Phila.

I am a Christian and a member of the Schuylkill Deanery of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, a group of Episcopal churches in West Philadelphia. This issue is a matter of faith for me as a follower of Jesus, who asked me to be a peacemaker.

I am alarmed at the proliferation of untraceable guns in our city, and this affects our neighborhood directly. In 2021 NBC News in Philadelphia reported (“3 Pipes Turned into a Shotgun”: Nearly 1-in-10 Guns Seized in Philly Are Homemade, October 6, 2021) that 1 out of every 10 of all firearms confiscated at crime scenes in Philadelphia were ghost guns. That number is rapidly expanding year by year.

“The number of "ghost guns" recovered by Philadelphia police during criminal investigations has skyrocketed to 436 through Oct. 4 of this year, more than all the homemade guns seized in the city in 2019 and 2020 combined.”

What worries me most is the impact of ghost guns on our young people. Underage children can easily buy gun kits or parts on the Internet using their phones and access untraceable firearms they can assemble in an hour. Guns have been the leading cause of death for teenagers of color for some time and are now, as of 2021, the leading cause for all American teenagers. Letting them use their phones to obtain a gun by mail puts our kids in danger. The death of even one child from a firearm is a tragedy, and I need to see you taking an active role in stemming the tide of gun violence in our youth. Legislation to regulate ghost guns is critical to doing this.

Pennsylvania needs to join the many states regulating the possession and sale of ghost guns. In Maryland, anyone who possesses a ghost gun is now subject to a misdemeanor punishable by up to 2 years imprisonment. People who sell ghost guns are subject to a misdemeanor punishable by up to 5 years imprisonment or a \$10,000 fine.

On behalf of the children of West Philadelphia, please work with your colleagues in our state legislature to advance meaningful ghost gun legislation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Email _____

Address _____
