

**September 3, 2021**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL FILES AMICUS BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF FEDERAL FIREARM REGULATIONS**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today led a coalition of 18 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief supporting federal laws restricting the commercial sale of handguns to persons under the age of 21. In the brief, filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit, Raoul and the coalition argue that such restrictions protect residents from the harmful effects of gun violence, as well as promote the safe use of firearms.

Raoul and the coalition [filed the brief](#) in *Hirschfeld v. Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms, Tobacco, and Explosives*, a lawsuit challenging federal statutes and regulations that bar 18-to-20-year-olds from purchasing handguns from federally licensed dealers. The plaintiffs argue that such restrictions violate the Second Amendment, and a three-judge panel agreed, holding that the federal laws are unconstitutional. The federal government is now asking the full court to rehear the case.

“States and the federal government are entitled to enact commonsense gun laws that protect residents, and the decision in this case could affect public safety across the country,” Raoul said. “Age-based restrictions on firearms are an important tool in the fight against the gun violence epidemic. I urge the court to rehear this case and consider the dangerous ramifications that eliminating age-based restrictions could have on public safety.”

In the brief, Raoul and the coalition explain that the decision is the first to strike down an age-based restriction on the sale or access to firearms and so breaks with the decisions of multiple other federal courts. Raoul and the coalition argue that age-based restrictions on the sale of firearms are presumptively lawful regulatory measures and that such restrictions are reasonably tailored to the governmental interest in public safety.

More specifically, Raoul and the coalition argue that the court should rehear the case because:

- **The decision could raise meritless questions about the constitutionality of state laws nationwide that protect public safety by limiting young people from accessing firearms.** States have long exercised their governmental prerogative to implement measures that regulate the sale and use of firearms for individuals under the age of 21. Nearly every state, as well as the District of Columbia, has determined that imposing age-based restrictions on the sale or use of firearms is necessary to promote public safety and curb gun violence within its borders. Raoul and the coalition argue that the panel decision will raise needless questions about the constitutionality of these laws.
- **The decision endangers public safety by eliminating an important safeguard against the scourge of gun violence.** Raoul and the coalition argue that the federal restrictions at issue in this case serve an important public safety purpose, and if the decision remains in place, it will remove an important safeguard against the scourge of gun violence.

Joining Raoul in the brief are the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.