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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS AND CORPORATION COUNSEL HINDS-RADIX ANNOUNCE FEDERAL LAWSUIT AGAINST ONLINE RETAILERS ILLEGALLY SELLING DEADLY GHOST GUN COMPONENTS INTO NEW YORK CITY

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Good morning. And – this important announcement of going after those gun manufacturers that produce ghost guns. And even before saying that, I've known AG James for a little over 30 something years, and we have just worked together on so many different projects. And New York is a safer place by having an AG that is just focused on the quality of our office. And I just wanted to just personally thank her for the way she uses her office to go after everything from those lawmakers that are doing incorrect things to those who are selling opioid drugs, who are going into our businesses and using organized crime to steal, and the announcement today. Now, I value your friendship AG. I value your office and what you are doing. And so I'm joined today with the family members and professionals that are saying to New Yorkers, the 8.8 million New Yorkers, that we are going to fight against the surge of gun violence, particularly today's announcement on gun violence.

Mayor Adams: We want to halt the rapidly escalating danger of the illegal ghost guns. Ghost guns are the untraceable firearms that are assembled from parts and kits that are sold online. This morning, New York City filed a lawsuit against five online gun retailers that are illegally selling and delivering ghost guns components to addresses here in this city. With just a few clicks and a credit card, undercover investigators in the Sheriff's Office, and the sheriff is here with us today, were able to order the components and use them to assemble guns that are illegal under city and state law.

Mayor Adams: Some of the guns' components the sheriffs recovered are right here on display. If you look at this – particularly these extended magazines that allow you to really even circumvent the laws we put in place here in our state. As you can see, many of them are made of polymer plastic with metal slides. And the danger of the plastics is that many of the plastics disassembled won't be detected by metal detectors. And if we continue this evolution, I am sure you're going to find a time when even the slides would no longer be metal. That's why we must meet this head on.

Mayor Adams: The guns are typically partially assembled when shipped and have no serial numbers or other traceable parts of the guns. The recipient of these components then adds a few final pieces with easily available tools to create fully functional and untraceable firearms. Many

have high capacity magazines that turn a basic plastic item into the equivalent of an assault weapon capable of firing multiple shots and other kits are available to assemble actual semi-automatics, like the AK-47 that was used in Buffalo and Uvalde. These are dangerous weapons. We should not think these are just kits used for hobbyists. They're being used by murderers.

Mayor Adams: All of them are illegal. Think about it. No matter where you live, no matter where you are, you can order one of these weapons and use it for whatever issues that you are attempting to resolve by using violence. High capacity weapons can be ordered as if they were pre-assembled cabinets that just need the doors attached. These weapons, these ghost guns, as we call them, have been turning up all over our city. These weapons have been at crime scenes and in the hands of gang members. The NYPD has already seized 180 ghost guns this year alone, up to 181% increase that we have witnessed.

Mayor Adams: They have killed innocent New Yorkers, including our baby... Every time I think about the day we got the notification and had to tell her mom, Angellyh's mom – who was caught in the crossfire and just to have her here today, painful moment... that she's turned that pain into purpose. That gun is here on display today. You never forget about it. Angellyh's parents are the symbol of the strength that too many parents are having to display. And we also have Raven Scott, the mother of Isaiah Duncan, who I spoke with that day. He was injured in the same shooting, which killed Angellyh. And I want to thank them both for being a symbol of our strength. And sadly, ghost guns are too common. And we saw a young man assassinated with a ghost gun at a bodega in the Bronx after an argument with the shooter. And a ghost gun used in the shooting of multiple patrons at a nightclub in Inwood.

Mayor Adams: Today, we are saying not in our city and we will lead the nation in fighting against these guns. We are not going to let gun companies turn New York into a city of mail-order murder. Whether they are hidden in the trunks of cars or in parts in a plain brown box, they are illegal and we will fight against it. We will take every lawful action possible to stop gun retailers from profiting over public safety. We're asking the court to issue a preliminary injunction ordering the defendants to immediately stop sending ghost guns into New York City. We need an immediate action. Every day a new gun is shipped here, there's a potential to take an innocent life or maim an innocent person. And we say over and over again, the sea of violence is being fed by many rivers. And this river is coming from far away.

Mayor Adams: And the retailers we seek to identify, Arm or Ally based in Kansas City, Missouri. Rainier Arms based in North Auburn, Washington. 80P Builders based in Lango, Florida. Rock Slide USA based in Broadway, North Carolina. And Indie Guns based in Orlando, Florida. No New York address, but New Yorkers must address the violence that comes from these shipments.

Mayor Adams: These retailers are repeatedly and willfully ignoring the city's restrictions, sending hundreds of the illegal packages to New York City addresses. Many of which are later recovered by the work of the New York City Police Department. And when you look at some of these items in front of us, which was purchased by undercover sheriffs, you see the extent of what we are talking about.

Mayor Adams: This is the gun that murdered young Angellyh. Look at this gun. You don't see the difference between one that was bought by a gunshot. This one here, I'm sorry, posted on top.

You don't see this gun. Don't know the difference from the one that's purchased in a gun shop or one that is put together and manufactured together. This is the same type of weapon that can take the life of an innocent person. And you look over to the far right. You see some of the guns that the police commissioner and I displayed a few weeks ago. We will not stand by and allow these companies to flout the law and endanger our communities and kill our young people. We will make our voices heard and use the court system to stop this plague on our cities. We will not make the already difficult job of detecting guns by our law enforcement officers to even become more challenging and difficult as they attempt to look at these ghost guns. The lawsuit against these five gun retailers is a message to the rest of them who are selling these guns.

Mayor Adams: If you sell ghost guns in New York, we will come after you. We support the federal government gun legislation that has just recently passed, but we need more help from city and state lawmakers to shut down the plastic pipeline. And we have to push back against the activist Supreme Court that is striking down our long established gun safety laws and making us all less safe. We will do everything in our powers to keep New Yorkers safe from gun violence. And now I want to turn it over to who I believe is our partner in this pursuit, my friend and the state's chief law enforcement person, Attorney General Letitia James.

New York Attorney General Letitia James: Thank you.

Attorney General James: I want to thank the mayor for his continued commitment to getting illegal guns off of our streets and for his partnership in this fight, and our long relationship as friends. We are here today to announce major action to combat the gun violence crisis that we are seeing not only in New York, but all across this nation, as cities and states across the country have been devastated by gun violence and legislative inaction. The mayor and I have attended too many funerals all throughout our public careers. I've held too many mothers and fathers and family members over open caskets. I've had to pray too many times and prayers, words, just not enough. It requires action. We have stepped up time and time again to hold gun makers accountable and to get these weapons of death off of our streets, especially in the wake of last week's Supreme Court decision on New York's licensing laws.

Attorney General James: And I look forward and I continue to look forward to Thursday's extraordinary session as they pass responsible regulations here in the state of New York. We are grappling with a public safety crisis that has claimed far too many lives, and increasingly ghost guns are to blame for the destruction and the carnage and the harm. So today, the Office of the Attorney General, we are filing a lawsuit against 10 companies that have been illegally selling ghost guns into New York. These 10 out of state companies have sold tens of thousands of illegal ghost gun parts to New Yorkers. Parts that have been easily converted to working guns that have actually claimed lives. They sell ghost gun pieces or kits directly to consumers without a background check and without any federally required record of the sale.

Attorney General James: In fact, in many cases, they have sold to consumers who otherwise would not be legally required or legally allowed to purchase firearms from a licensed retailer. And let me just tell you how it works. Anyone, anyone can buy a ghost gun kit or part from these companies for between \$150 and \$200. These kits arrive at your front door with instructions for the simple changes that need to be made, milling down a small amount of plastic at the top of the frame, drilling three small holes into the side. Some companies even include the drill bits in their kits. Often step by step videos are included to show you how to convert these guns. And even

they offer a live helpline that customers can call. In the words of defendant 80 Percent Arms, this process of converting these receivers or framers into fully operable and untraceable firearms is "ridiculously easy."

Attorney General James: That simple process to assemble, and the fact that the unfinished frames and receivers evade public safety measures is one of the main marketing and selling points that the company uses. 80 Percent Arms writes on its website, "That means no red tape, including no registering and 80% lower. No transfer fees like a typical firearm. And even better, no FFL required. It ships right to your door." What is an FFL? The FFL is a federal firearm's license, which requires by law that the Federal Licensing Center conduct background checks and a federal firearm license, you must have an FFL to sell or ship guns. So this is a clear violation of federal law. Another distributor, GlockStore touts on its website, "You can build a completely legal handgun without any government's oversight, AKA interference. No fuss, no muss, no registration, no records."

Attorney General James: These non-existent oversight of the sale of these products that can cause real harm and has caused real harm has resulted in the death of individuals here in New York. Some ghost guns from these defendants have been linked to shootings and murders in New York City. In May 2020, distributor Brownells sold and shipped ghost gun products to a convicted criminal and repeat customer. Let me say that again, a convicted criminal and a repeat customer, who was legally ineligible to own or operate a firearm, that same month that customer allegedly used a ghost gun in a triple shooting that killed one person and injured two others in the Bronx. Another individual named Edison Cruz received at least seven packages from Brownells, the defendant, at an address in the Bronx between 2020 and 2022. And we, and the Office of the Attorney General, have reason to believe that those packages included unfinished frames or receivers and or the parts to make into ghost guns.

Attorney General James: Mr. Cruz was not legally permitted to own a firearm. He was previously arrested multiple times on violent charges. In May of 2022, Mr. Cruz was arrested for a triple shooting in the Bronx that left one person dead, and two others hospitalized. He used a ghost gun in that shooting. And in the words of the New York Post, Mr. Cruz was "a nut for illegal ghost guns." From the New York Post. There are also individuals who make their own business out of buying these kits, assembling them into operable ghost guns, and then selling them to others. Law enforcement in Buffalo said that they sell for as much as \$2,000 on the street. And these ghost gun parts only exist to be converted into operable, dangerous firearms. And these companies only exist to provide these weapons to individuals who are otherwise ineligible to own a gun, or basically want to evade any sort of basic federal or state controls.

Attorney General James: And as we've seen, the consequences are absolutely dire, heartbreaking. And that's why we're here today. We're cracking down on these egregious and flagrant violations of the law where companies put profit over people. And for the first time, we are using the state's public nuisance law to sue these companies. These companies have advertised, they've sold, and they've shipped these ghost gun parts to New Yorkers. And these actions have clearly and repeatedly endangered the health and safety of our communities, creating a public nuisance. We are suing them under a law that is unique to the Office of Attorney General because they engaged in repeated and persistent illegal conduct, knowingly and repeatedly selling these pieces, tens of thousands of them into New York State, even though it's illegal to do so. And we are bringing several other claims as well to officially ban these

businesses. Ban them from selling or shipping these illegal products to New York. We are seeking restitution and damages and disgorgement for widespread harm that they have caused. We would like to create an abatement fund, similar to what we did in our opioid litigation – an abatement fund to eliminate the public nuisance they are responsible for creating, exasperating and perpetuating and also to assist in addressing gun violence in New York State.

Attorney General James: Gun violence is impacting New Yorkers every day. It claims lives. And ghost guns don't discriminate. Killing young, old, Black, white, Asian, Latino. It's an equal opportunity death weapon. Stealing opportunity, stealing dreams, ripping families apart and causing widespread fear in New York State. And these companies have greatly contributed to the crisis. And their products have claimed many lives.

Attorney General James: And perhaps most disturbing, they are knowingly and intentionally selling these weapons to anyone and everyone without care. But we are committed to combating this violence. And we will continue to do so. And I will do so as the attorney general of the great state of New York. And I will do everything in my power to go after those who endanger children and senior citizens and New Yorkers.

Attorney General James: We are here because a ghost gun stole the life of a beautiful 16 year old girl, Angellyh Yambo. She was killed by a ghost gun in April, when she was walking home from school. Her mother is here and you will hear from her shortly. But I want her to know that we are doing this in honor of her daughter.

Attorney General James: Isaiah was also shot in the leg. He's a 17 year old honor student. And thankfully, he is still with us. His mom is here today, Raven Scott. And you will also hear from her. And the mayor and I and others all across the state of New York will continue to work tirelessly to go after these companies because of the pain they have caused so many families like theirs. We will not let another child be killed by these weapons without action. Not now, not ever. Thank you. And now, we'd like to turn to Judge Sylvia Hinds-Radix, the head of Corporation Council in the City of New York.

Sylvia Hinds-Radix, Corporation Counsel, Law Department: Good morning, and thank you Attorney General James for that introduction. To Mayor Adams, to Attorney General James, to Commissioner Sewell, Sheriff Miranda, and a multi-governmental team who are here gathered, and to the mothers who have been impacted by this gun violence. And I also would like to thank the Manhattan Community College for allowing us to hold this press conference here today.

Hinds-Radix: New York City is experiencing an increasing number of illegal, untraceable ghost guns that have ended in the hands of criminals. The results are tragic. Their shooting – and the death of children – and their bloodshed in our communities. Multiple agencies and officials who are here are collaborating to eradicate this problem. You've seen, and will see, the hardworking and meticulous efforts of the NYPD, the Sheriff's Office, the District Attorney's Office, and the Office of the Attorney General. All of whom are working closely with us.

Hinds-Radix: Today, the state announced its effort to address the issue statewide. The City of New York is also addressing this issue with a civil suit of its own to protect New York City. The Office of the Corporation Council, my office, today filed a civil lawsuit against five online retailers of ghost guns who continue to sell into New York City, more than two years after the

City Council passed a law prohibiting sale. These defendants are violating the city's administrative code with their deliveries of these guns.

Hinds-Radix: They're knowingly or recklessly creating and contributing to what is known in legal terms as a public nuisance. This nuisance comes about by selling and shipping prohibited guns into the city. These retailers have created a serious risk to New Yorkers and other members of the public by continuing to sell into our city. And this information from the sheriff office who investigated this, indicates that this is continuing.

Hinds-Radix: As corporation council of the City of New York, I am exercising the authority explicitly given to me under the New York State General Business Law to sue and remedy the danger these defendants are posing to the public's health and safety. This lawsuit is targeting the retailers who are currently selling in the city to residents of the City of New York. And we will ask the court for an order to immediately bar them from this illegal practice. We will also ask the court to direct these sellers to help us mitigate the damages and the danger they have caused by providing a list of the addresses of those who have received ghost guns.

Hinds-Radix: Be assured the City of New York will use every legal tool available to hold these retailers fully accountable under the law. The city seeks relief in joining each defendant from selling, shipping, distributing, delivering, or otherwise supplying unserialized, unfinished frames, or receivers to a New York City address or person or entity that the defendant knows or should have known is in violation of our law. Ordering each defendant to abate the nuisance.

Hinds-Radix: Ghost guns endanger lives. Ghost guns are killing our children and they're killing innocent people. The mayor, the City Council, the attorney general, the Sheriff's Office and the Police Department and the district attorneys in conjunction with the corporation council are all committed to working diligently and collaboratively to protect the citizens of this great city. I will now introduce Sheriff Anthony Miranda.

New York City Sheriff Anthony Miranda: Good morning. I want to start by thanking the mayor, the attorney general. And judge, thank you for introducing me. We want to thank all of our partners, especially the New York City Police Department and the Law Department.

Sheriff Miranda: Working in collaboration with our fellow law enforcement colleagues, the Sheriff's Bureau of Criminal Investigation, investigated online sales into New York of ghost gun components needed to complete ghost guns assembly. The components included unfinished frames also referred to as 80% framers and receivers, and other parts which do not have numbers and are untraceable. All illegal weapons are a danger. Ghost guns are particularly dangerous, because they are untraceable and unable to have a follow-up investigation.

Sheriff Miranda: By simply going online using a credit card, officers were able to purchase ghost gun components and have them shipped into New York City. Officers use fictitious IDs, fake bank accounts from Manhattan and mailing address. The investigation was conducted over two months, starting from April to present, and will be ongoing. Undercover officers contacted 18 retailers for ghost gun components.

Sheriff Miranda: Some retailers were compliant with the law, and others simply said they were out of stock. No inventory was available to send to New York. Officers received parts from five

retailers consisting of all the components necessary to assemble a firearm. One weapon had a threaded barrel, commonly used for suppression devices. And that's this weapon right here. No legitimate reason to have a threaded barrel in front of a gun except to put a suppressor on that. Three came with high capacity magazines, 17, 24 and 32 rounds. These are meant to do damage. These are meant to hurt our community.

Sheriff Miranda: The weapons were fully assembled with common household tools in about 90 minutes, and were successfully fired at the range. Our undercover investigator was not required to produce identification, no proof of age, and no background check whatsoever. The website selling these dangerous components touted how funny it would be to build a custom AR in the comfort and the privacy of your own home. Inviting buyers to assemble their own firearms for personal use with nothing simpler than handheld tools.

Sheriff Miranda: The service officers assembled these kids fully functioning guns. Similar components are easily used to assemble semi-automatic assault weapons. Ghost guns sold to New York City have ended up in the hands of convicted felons, of a prohibited and unlicensed possessors, as well as underage children.

Sheriff Miranda: The Sheriff's Office will continue to conduct the investigations going forward in partnership with all the agencies you see here. It is important that we are working collaboratively and collectively to ensure that we cover all aspects of the law to prevent these guns from coming into New York City and harming our families and harming our communities.

Sheriff Miranda: It is a great pleasure to be a part of this partnership that's taking the safety of our city as the most important priority over agency titles, and the cooperation is unheard of, and we're looking forward to continuing that going forward. On that note, I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce one of our major partners in this fight. The police commissioner, Commissioner Sewell.

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell, Police Department: Thank you very much. Good morning everyone. Thank you once again for being here. The New York City Police Department is proud to stand with our law enforcement partners today as we tackle together this increasing problem. The rise of ghost guns is a disease or what the mayor rightly called a plague that we must stop.

Commissioner Sewell: This is about reducing the number of victims and making certain we don't hamper the vital efforts of our law enforcement professionals who are saving lives with their work. Flooding our communities with these new, largely untraceable firearms makes the job of the NYPD and police departments everywhere much more dangerous. And they will result in more grieving families, and more innocent victims senselessly taken like 16 year old Angellyh Yambo, or injured like Isaiah.

Commissioner Sewell: The proliferation of illegal guns in general has long been a public safety threat. And now, it has a new face. Ghost guns have no serial numbers. And owners mainly possess them with no registration license or permit. NYPD gun arrests are at a 28 year high. But we cannot take anything for granted. We need to protect and prevent additional victims.

Commissioner Sewell: The NYPD sees the city's first ghost gun in 2018. In that year, the total recovered was 17. In 2019, it was 50. By 2020, the number increased to 150. Last year, it was 275. And in just the first half of this year, the NYPD has recovered 180 ghost guns. A more than 181% increase from the 64 ghost gun arrests... excuse me, seizures, by this time last year. The problem is obvious. And the dangers to the people of New York are clear.

Commissioner Sewell: I want to thank the New York City Sheriff's Office for their important and valuable work in this investigation. The attorney general and the [corporation] council for their leadership in holding the online resellers accountable, excuse me, retailers accountable. Collectively, our job is to keep New Yorkers safe. And we will do everything possible to keep that promise. We make that promise every day to the people we serve. What we do matters. What we do has to save lives and keep New Yorkers safe. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: Thank you. Thank you, commissioner. And I really want to thank the sheriff for using his office in the manner that we want to have that partnership and taking an initiative in that two month investigation. We want to now bring on the parents of young Angellyh. And a young man, Isaiah – a young child that was shot. We would like to both bring them together. Out of the death of young Angellyh, I believe we born the life of a friendship and the pursuit of how we are turning pain into purpose.

Mayor Adams: It's just really significant. You expect your baby to go to school and bring home A's on their report card. You don't expect four police officers to knock on your door and report that they were shot by a stray shooting. It's just really hurtful. And the commissioner and I, as we moved across the city and visited the parents who are experiencing this horrific attack on our public safety, that we want to let them know that we are here for them and we're going to continue our pursuit.

Yanely Henriquez: Good morning.

Ravin Scott: Good morning, guys. I'm Raven Scott.

Henriquez: I'm Yanely Henriquez. I'm Angellyh's mom. On Friday, the 8th of April, around 1:45 P.M., my 16 year old daughter's, Angellyh Yambo, life was taken by a single bullet by a ghost gun that your company manufactured as she was heading home after leaving school. Angellyh unfairly left this world without saying I love you, well, or goodbye to the loved ones. I still have yet to deal with the loss of my daughter. And my shattered heart will never heal. And also having to live with her memory. Your company are to blame for selling these guns that took my precious daughter's life. Only to profit your gain.

Henriquez: Angellyh brought so much light and love into my life. And now forcefully, I have to start a new life without my daughter. The family is lost for words and heartbroken. I have to live with that affliction forever.

Henriquez: Your companies are at fault for the damage because of this lack of background checks. Having no permit for no one purchase, a gun or for unethical assets of underage teenagers. I desperately wish I could turn back the hand of time to bring my daughter Angellyh. Back to tell her how much I love her, embrace her, spend time. But that's unrealistic. I will have to pretend to have Angellyh physically here with me until we reunite again. I love you baby.

Scott: Thank you.

Henriquez: Thank you, guys.

Mayor Adams: We want to thank our congressional delegation for passing of – some important gun reform as it dams one of the river. But we have many more to go. So we want to bring on Congressman Jerry Nadler. Congressman.

U.S. Representative Jerry Nadler: Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor. I am proud to stand here today in support of this important lawsuit. Ghost guns are guns. Plain and simple. And they're quickly becoming the weapon of choice for violent criminals and gun traffickers. That's because you can buy these deadly weapons without a background check. And they're nearly impossible to trace. The manufacturers who make these ghost guns knowing full well that they're likely to lead to bloodshed in our communities must be held accountable.

Representative Nadler: A few weeks ago, I was proud to pass through the House of Representatives comprehensive gun safety legislation that I introduced called The Protecting Our Kids Act. Among other things, the bill included the provision to ensure that ghost guns are subject to all existing federal firearms regulations. Although the Senate bill that President Biden just signed into law was far more modest, it still represented the most significant gun safety legislation to be enacted in decades. But we cannot stop there.

Representative Nadler: We have watched the tragic loss of too many innocent lives. Just recently, we lost 10 African Americans in Buffalo, targeted because of their race. 19 young students and two teachers in Uvalde, just a few days short of their summer vacations. Scores more lost in other mass shootings too numerous to mention. And over a 100 more Americans killed every day in gun violence that never makes the headlines. And I must say that the bill that passed the Senate, unlike the bill that passed the House, did nothing about ghost guns. We have an epidemic of gun violence in this country.

Representative Nadler: And we are the only developed nation with this problem. It's not, as some of our Republican colleagues say, because our population is the most mentally ill. It's not because our schools need better doors. It's because our nation is awash in guns, too many of them in the hands of people who pose a threat to our streets, to our schools, even to our houses of worship. And where do you go if you want to do a harm, but you can't legally purchase a gun. You get a ghost gun of course, no background check, no regulations. Just a kit you can put together in your living room that's virtually untraceable if used in a crime.

Representative Nadler: The people who make these ghost guns know full well that they're selling deadly weapons to people who cannot legally buy them elsewhere, but they won't let that stand in the way of profit. That's unacceptable. With an out of control Supreme Court that has mangled the meaning of the Second Amendment that prevented states like New York from enacting reasonable gun safety measures, I'm pleased that New York City is taking action today to keep our streets safe with this important lawsuit. Thank you.

Mayor Adams: Thank you. Thank you, congressman. Our final speaker is Nick Suplina from Everytown for Gun Safety. We want to thank them for their work for so many years, addressing this issue and continue to partner with lawmakers and organizations. Nick. Okay.

Nick Suplina: Thank you, mayor. My name's Nick Suplina, I'm senior vice president for law and policy at Everytown for Gun Safety. We're the nation's largest gun violence prevention organization. We work across the country in every state, but I am a New Yorker raising two kids here. My family's lived in the five boroughs for over a hundred years. So when New York leaders like the mayor and the attorney general and some of the public servants you see here today are taking bold action to keep us safe, I feel a personal debt of gratitude. So thank you. I also want to thank the survivors that are here today and working through their trauma to deliver a message that I think is very clearly received. We're here today because of one simple general premise, you shouldn't be allowed to get away with breaking the law just because you sell guns or gun kits.

Suplina: That's why New York last year passed its landmark industry accountability law because for far too long, federal immunity has allowed members of the gun industry to get away with putting our lives in danger through their reckless business practices. Instead of following the law, they've tried to circumvent it, putting their profits over our public safety every step of the way. Today's lawsuit reaffirmed that basic principle that selling guns doesn't earn you a get out of jail free card, not anymore. As a result of the alleged actions of these suppliers, tens of thousands of untraceable ghost guns made their way into our communities often directly into the hands of traffickers and criminals. This is adding to the fastest growing gun safety threat in the country and their dangerous conduct put lives at risk. We won't stand for it. Not anymore.

Suplina: Now let me just say one thing about ghost guns. You all know at this point what they are. The industry likes to say that they're homemade to try to avoid the law. When you go pick up a pie at your local supermarket and heat it up for 15 minutes, maybe throw some vanilla ice cream on top of it, that's not a homemade apple pie. Okay? You wouldn't call it a homemade apple pie, would you? No. And when you order these frames and receivers and kits online with jigs and drill bits, it's not a homemade firearm. It's a firearm delivered to your door. These lawsuits are more, though, than just actions against several ghost gun companies. They serve as a warning to other rogue distributors, manufacturers and dealers: continue to flout the law, continue to ignore the practices that will keep us safe, and New York is ready to take you to court for the harm you cause to our communities.

Suplina: I want to note the obvious, as it's been said. We're gathered here in the wake of an incredibly dangerous and incorrect Supreme Court decision in *NYSRPA v. Bruen*, but we are New Yorkers. We're not going to allow six unelected justices to stop us from keeping our neighborhood safe. That court may have closed a door, but you better believe we're going to use every other door and window we can find, and holding the industry accountable to the New York Nuisance law is one of them. So today, Attorney General James and Mayor Adams are taking rogue members of the gun industry to task for their contribution to our gun violence epidemic. Tomorrow, lawmakers in Albany will convene a special session to debate and pass updated laws to keep our public spaces safe. And in the coming days and weeks and months, we'll continue to do everything we can to protect our communities, use every tool at our disposal and hold accountable the industry that is profiting off of our gun violence epidemic. Thank you. Turn it back to you, Mayor.

Mayor Adams: Thank you. Thank you. Appreciate that. Open for questions, any of the attorneys, on-topics.

Question: These lawsuits are obviously coming with the backdrop of the legislature's special session and the framework that they have put out saying they're going to have these sensitive places, including mass transit. I'm assuming you've talked to people about that and curious to get your opinion on it, as well as considering the concealed carry permitting law or system is now on the forefront of everyone's minds. Curious if you still have, or you have a permit for a concealed weapon, and if you still have a weapon.

Mayor Adams: Do I have one? Yes, I own three firearms that I had when I retired from the Department. I have to get that renewed periodically. And those are some of the things that we're looking at. We're hoping that the state lawmakers would look at and I secure it as it's supposed to be based on Police Department procedures.

Question: But it's a concealed permit that you have?

Mayor Adams: As a retired member of the New York City Police Department, you're allowed to have a concealed permit, a carry permit. It's not so much called a concealed. It's a carry permit as a retired member if you retire in good standards. If you don't retire in good standards, you are not allowed to do so.

Question: Do you carry a weapon with you?

Mayor Adams: No I don't.

Question: Can we get a response just on the Albany framework of the legislation?

Mayor Adams: I'm sorry.

Question: The Albany framework of the legislation?

Mayor Adams: You want to talk about Albany or?

Attorney General James: We've reviewed the legislation in Albany. We've worked with members of the leaders of both houses as well as the second floor of the Governor's Office. And we are in support. The Office of Attorney General is in support of the package of bills, and I don't carry a gun.

Question: So about the Supreme Court ruling, I'm wondering... I think this is for the AG, if you could talk about how your lawsuit interacts with that. I mean, for instance, if someone without a criminal record who would pass a background check and ordered one of these, would they have to get a concealed permit, a home permit? For somebody ordering one, what puts them at legal risk for kind of getting...

Attorney General James: So let me just say that this investigation dates prior to the decision by the United States Supreme Court. We have been looking at individuals online who've been

selling ghost guns for some time. And as a result of our investigation, we determined that these individuals were in violation of federal, state, and local law. And so we have filed a separate action based on statutes, which are unique to the Office of Attorney General. With respect to the legislation, which is before the two houses in Albany, which will hopefully, will be passed tomorrow in extraordinary session. We have reviewed the legislation. We support the legislation. And our lawsuit is intended at the marketing practices of these 10 companies and also at the fact that they were seeking to evade federal, state, and local law and were selling products. Selling these firearms to individuals who are not legally allowed to purchase firearms, otherwise. Including, but not limited to a number of criminals.

Question: I'm trying to clarify what the illegality is here. Is it the delivery to the state of New York? And if that's the illegality, doesn't the lawsuit just compel these manufacturers and sellers to deliver it to New Jersey or Connecticut or to another state where the same folks can pick up the same ghost guns?

Attorney General James: The mayor and I can only talk about New York State and New York City respectively. Let me just say that what we are seeking to do is ban the marketing practices, create a fund to address gun violence in the state of New York, and basically let these companies know that what they are doing is in violation of federal, state, and local law. We're seeking injunctive relief as well for a number of other issues.

Question: But are those guns themselves, is the creation of a kit like the ones right over there, is that illegal in and of itself before its delivery?

Attorney General James: So the issue here is one, they were evading federal, state, and local law. Two, these are firearms and based upon the law, based on the federal law and state law, it is illegal to sell firearms into the state of New York. Based on that, based on the fact that under 63-12, the executive law, when you engage in repeated acts of illegality, you violate state law and therefore the Office of Attorney General has a duty and obligation to pursue you in civil court.

Question: This is for the mayor or [inaudible] or the attorney general. Can you explain the decision to go after ghost gun sellers but not traditional manufacturers and distributors and is that part of your ongoing efforts or future plans?

Attorney General James: I'm not sure what... Can you repeat the question?

Question: Can you explain why this lawsuit... Most legal guns in the state and the city are Glocks, [inaudible], traditional firearms. Can you explain why they're not part of the case right now?

Attorney General James: At this particular case, we're focusing on ghost guns. But as you know, in the Office of Attorney General, we focused on illegal guns overall. Since I've been the attorney general, we have taken off the streets over 3,000 guns through gun buybacks. In addition to that, we've engaged all across the State of New York. We're pursuing individuals who engage in illegal conduct. We have done a number of takedowns and we have gone after individuals online who have sold illegal firearms, including but not limited to ghost guns. This is just one tool in our tool kit and one of the many efforts that we've attempted to address as it

relates to gun violence. As I, during my tenure, as the Attorney General, and we will continue. This investigation is ongoing.

Mayor Adams: And just to... We say this terminology all the time. There are many rivers that feed the sea of gun violence. There are many rivers. And what's unique about what the police commissioner and I are doing, we're look to dam every river. If you dam one river such as ghost guns, and you leave the other rivers from those guns that are manufactured legally, but they're illegally sold, then you're missing a target. We are going to dam each river to make sure we can stop and drain that sea of violence. And this is one of the rivers we are announcing today with all of our partners that we are looking to dam by doing this lawsuit.

Question: Follow up question for the attorney general. You sent a bunch of cease and desist orders earlier this month to the ghost gun sellers [inaudible]. Can you clarify whether these gun sellers have received those orders and continue then to violate those-

Attorney General James: Separate and apart, separate and apart. In addition to that, as you know, we've worked with the federal government, ATF. And we've worked with also attorney generals all across the state of New York in again addressing the iron pipeline.

Question: I had a question about what kind of precedent there is for these kind of lawsuits. How does this compare the lawsuit that was brought by the families of Sandy Hook and would this... That was using the Connecticut consumer law, which I know we have as well. I'm trying to understand if you are successful both the state case and the city case, would this be something that other municipalities and other states could then kind of use to then file their own suits? Is this relatively a new legal strategy?

Attorney General James: So let me just say that the public nuisance law, which was passed by the State Legislature, this is the first case, a case of first precedent. In addition to that, I can't think of any other state in this nation that has a similar jurisdiction as we do under Executive Law, Section 63-12, which allows us to go after businesses when they engage in repeated acts of illegality.

Question: Oh, hi, this is for the mayor. This is a question about in light of the Supreme Court ruling, I'm wondering what your thoughts are. We had a video yesterday of a retired sergeant pulling out his gun in the subway system to defend himself against someone that was allegedly harassing him. What do you think about that?

Mayor Adams: I'm not clear on exactly what the case is about with the sergeant. There are clear procedures of when you can use your firearm and I have to look over that case. I don't know all the particulars about that, but if ever a retired member incorrectly use their firearms, the Police Department can use the necessary procedures to take that firearm away and not allow that person to use it. And so I'm sure the commission is going to look into that particular case.

Question: Mr. Mayor, I know last month you requested that ATF revoke Polymer80's license, and that never happened, didn't gain much traction. How much does flat-footedness from the federal government kind of cause more troubles in this effort, especially if reference to the kind of vague definitions of these firearms that defense had put forward?

Mayor Adams: Well, the Polymer request, I think it's premature to say that we didn't gain any traction. We are in constant communication with our federal agencies. And there's a process to, if they're going to decide to take appropriate actions or not. So it's premature to say if they're not going to, but this is a continuation, and we do need the federal government. Because if we get it right here in New York City, and as Andrew indicated that all of a sudden New York State, all of a sudden New Jersey, Connecticut, Philadelphia. If they don't get it right also then you're just one train ride, one bus ride away from aggravating our problem. So some of the things we're doing, we're going to ask for our federal government, the federal government partners to help us and ensure that it becomes a federal law.

Question: I have two questions. One's for the mayor, and one's for the attorney general. First the mayor. What's your laundry list for sensitive locations given what's going to happen tomorrow? It will be debated. What are you looking for?

Mayor Adams: My definition of sensitive location is a sensitive city, the entire City of New York, but the Supreme Court said we can't do that. And so I think that the clear definition of what it looks like is going to fall with my Law Department, Judge Radix, and my counsel, Brendan McGuire. They're going to sit down within the parameters of the rulings to identify those locations. We know schools. We know governmental buildings. We think that there are other areas that we are going to define as sensitive locations. And they're going to give us the list, and they're going to move that list forward. And they're still analyzing how we could properly identify a sensitive location.

Question: Attorney general, within Judge Thomas' decision, he specifically took a shot at the idea that the island of Manhattan is a sensitive location. What do you think about that?

Attorney General James: You don't want me to respond to Justice Thomas. [Laughter.] So, I won't say that. So with regards to sensitive areas, houses of faith, obviously concerts, places where individuals who can assemble and landlords obviously can post notices up with regards to individuals not having in and around their common spaces firearms.

Question: Attorney general, with respect to the marketing of the guns, they're clearly marketing to people that want to skirt federal laws. Have you seen any specific targeting to either criminal groups or specific targeting to any individuals to try to really permeate these type of guns into [inaudible]?

Attorney General James: That was part of our investigation. We've not seen that. Again, a number of individuals have been arrested and a number of these individuals, few of these individuals have had criminal records.

Question: This question is for the mayor. You spoke about how you'll be filing lawsuits against these ghost gun retailers aggressively. If you have the ability to do so, will you be tracking and going after the New York residents actually purchasing these illegal firearms?

Mayor Adams: The individuals who are actually purchasing the firearms? That is part of the actions that the New York City Police Department have been doing. They have been going after those who actually have the ghost guns in their possessions, because remember they're illegal.

They're not legal. And we have been identifying and we have confiscated and made arrests. And those who have actually possessed these illegal firearms.

Question: Are you able to track down these people based off of the way that they're purchasing through companies instead of just criminal acts, just for the possession?

Mayor Adams: Is your question that the mere fact that they are possessing these illegal guns, that's illegal, it's a gun. And so they... it's a crime, criminal possession of a firearm.

Question: Will you be going after these people? Are you tracking down these who are purchasing these ghost guns?

Mayor Adams: Yes. Yes. Anyone that illegally possess a firearm, we are identifying and tracking down.

Question: Two questions. What percentage of the guns, I saw 12%, used in crimes are ghost guns? And the second thing, these ghost gun retailers obviously know you're after them. They have countdowns on their website saying in addition to what's going on with your lawsuit, but the ATF's ghost gun rule takes effect in 55 days, seven hours. So basically, get your purchases in now. They've got countdowns on their websites. What do you say to that? And what is that ATF ghost gun rule?

Commissioner Sewell: I won't speak to the ATF rule, but as it stands now, we're obviously concerned about that delay because it is a bit of a countdown. So, our objective is to get as many off the street as humanly possible. We have a significant number of investigations that involve ghost guns. It's a little difficult to say how many are unaccounted for, obviously. At this time, it's very difficult to say so. But we endeavor to take every single one off the street. But the countdown concerns us. And if it's a "Get all you can before it runs out," we're going to try to address that as we go along, as well.

Attorney General James: So the ATF has issued a new regulation clarifying that the terms, "frame and receiver" as used shall include basically, ghost guns. The statute, as interpreted by the ATF, includes unfinished frames and receivers. It goes into effect in August, which is why you have a countdown clock. And that's why we are seeking a immediate restraining order against these companies.

Question: As the commissioner of one of the greatest police force in the world, what does this mean to your members? Increased amount of illegal guns on the street. What does it mean to you members?

Commissioner Sewell: My members are placed in danger having to investigate these crimes, these purchases. It means that we have to be diligent. We have to be vigilant. We have to be alert. But we have to work a lot harder. And we intend to. We work with our partners to make sure we go after these people who willingly use them against someone else and people who purchase them with malintent, obviously. Every single day, the members of the NYPD show up to make this city safe. We are experiencing our 10th, going into our 11th week of a decline in shootings, a decline in murders, but we cannot take our foot off the gas at any time. We are

working every single day to drive crime down, drive these numbers down, and get these guns off the street.

Question: Just a question on responsibility of jurisdiction. Why was it the Sheriff's Office or Department that handled the probe into this, not the Police Department? Could someone clarify who gets what in terms of attacking this issue?

Mayor Adams: Well, what we are asking every agency to do, is to closely examine what rules, what authority you have and to utilize it, to focus on those crises that we are experiencing in the city. So, this administration is using the full scope of all of our powers. The sheriff understood that they had a role in this area, partnering with the NYPD, that's dealing with other parts of ghost guns. They utilize their full scope and they're going to be doing more things. You are going to see every agency no longer falls into this myopic view. I am charging every agency to look at every authority, every power you have, to go after the problems that we are facing in the city. And that's what this sheriff has done in just a two month investigation. We have actions because of that.

Question: So, you're saying you're suing for restitution of damages. Will any of that money go to the families who've lost their children to ghost guns?

Mayor Adams: The AG has done an amazing job around even the opioid recovery to solve the problem. I think that if the law, or the rules, or the settlement allows us to do so, we should figure out how we can make family members whole in some way. That's not within my power or authority to do so, but we're always looking at how do we go back to those victims? And how do we make those victims whole? Unfortunately, those victims, the numbers are growing increasingly every day. But I don't have an objection to that, but that would be part of the settlement agreement.

Question: Is there a number attached to either how much the lawsuit could result in as far as damages?

Attorney General James: So, let me just be clear. There's two lawsuits. There's one from the city and there's one from the state. The state seeks to establish this abatement fund, and there is no amount of dollars that we are attaching to our claim for relief. We're seeking disgorgement of all of the profits that these 10 companies have been able to generate. And once we can determine the amount, that amount will be put in a abatement fund to address gun violence in the State of New York.

Question: I just wanted to run by both of you the comment I just got from one of the parties in this lawsuit, Indie Guns, the one based in Orlando. They say that this is a politically motivated effort to vilify a small business that has not violated federal, state, or municipal law. So, I want to see if I can get a response to that notion that this is to score political points here.

Attorney General James: We'll see them in court.

Mayor Adams: Well said. Okay, we're going to free ya'll up from the off-topic barrage. Thank you. Thank you. Job well done. Let's take a few off-topic from Michael.

Question: All right. So, I was wondering if you could talk about yesterday's election. In general, moderates did well, progressives not as well. It's been framed that there's a bit of a proxy war between yourself and AOC. What do you attribute the results to? As far as voter sentiment. What's going on here? Why do people vote the way they do?

Mayor Adams: It's always enticing to have the good guy, the villain, what have you. Nothing I do is about one particular lawmaker. I think Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and I have similar blue collar roots and she is not in my sights. I do not think about what her philosophy or opinions are. It's about solving the problems. We both want the same problems solved. We may question the routes to doing so, but we both want the same problem solved.

Mayor Adams: And as I stated yesterday, when I was at the governor's announcement victory in the primary, that it is time for us to come together, focus on those areas we agree on. And so, I think that many New Yorkers, poll after poll, New Yorkers say they want to be safe. They state they support their Police Department. They say they want affordable housing, like what we're doing with NYCHA and other things. They state they want their children educated. And those who won spoke to the desires of New Yorkers throughout the entire state. And when you look at the race and the outcome, clearly it is an alignment of what I've been saying for a long time.

Question: Yeah. How do you respond to those who say that members of your administration pressured and threatened voters in Borough Park into supporting Pinny Ringel for district leader?

Mayor Adams: How do you threaten voters?

Question: Pressured and threatened voters in Borough Park into supporting Ringel for district leader? How do you respond to those?

Mayor Adams: Well, clearly whomever said that can't be a New Yorker because New Yorkers, you cannot intimidate and threat. Voters are going to vote. They could care less of intimidation. We don't intimidate voters. We state what our vision is. And I believe Pinny Ringel had a clear vision for our city and he shared it with the voters. It's almost impossible to walk around with every voter and say, we going to threaten and intimidate you. That is not the process. The process is, you put your best message out to voters and voters decide on who they want to elect. And that's what happened there. And I'm excited that he was able to win the race because Borough Park is an important part of the city.

Question: Mr. Mayor, on congestion pricing. The MTA just announced that they have gotten their ducks in a row, essentially. Their questions are answered to the federal government. I wanted to see if I could get a sense from you, what you'd like to see from the program? If there are any exemptions that you would like to see come forth. How do you anticipate this shaping up as the MTA puts the program together?

Mayor Adams: I'm still looking at it. I know we are participating. I spoke with Deputy Mayor Meera Joshi. We have been really collaborating with the MTA, but we do need exemptions. We can't have the city taxes if a fire truck goes through, if a New York City bus goes through. The devil is in the details. We need to be clear that there should be a level of exemptions that we should put in place. That we're not overburdening New Yorkers for using our streets. I mean,

these are New York City streets. And so, we should not have us double tax. And we're looking at that now as part of our conversation.

Question: Just to clarify, you only want city-owned vehicles, essentially? Or other groups you're looking at to have an exemption, as well?

Mayor Adams: I think there's some other exemptions. I think those are low income New Yorkers that must use vehicles. Let's say if you have to go to chemo treatment at a certain hospital, we should take that into consideration. And so, it shouldn't be just a blanket of, we're not exempting anyone, and it can't be just city vehicles. I'm open to a real conversation and hear from those who must use vehicles. It's different from it being a luxury and then a necessity. And there are some cases that I believe it is a necessity. And I'm open to that conversation.

Question: Hello, mayor. With the open saturation of opioid treatment centers in Harlem and the negative effects of it, people nodding in the streets, how can you engage better with the community to decide when new centers are open? Because it's been a practice where some centers on the east side, they just popped up. There was no community engagement. And we are having our children walking past people nodding, shooting up the drugs that they're getting from the center. So, how can we work collectively to kind of change that tide?

Mayor Adams: Thank you for that. When I was running during the campaign, after the primary, I went to Harlem and I met with a group of residents that – they were concerned about 125th street. We did a walk around. They were dead on. You saw an over-proliferation of people just hanging out, loitering. There was a problem. We were dropping people off from Randall's Island, right at 2nd Avenue. And we had a meeting. The police commissioner and I met with Congressman Espaillat and other community leaders and stated, how could we do an initiative on 125th Street?

Mayor Adams: I was up there yesterday, or two days ago, and I saw the difference right away. We put a command center there. We did a collaboration of different agencies to not allow people just to loiter in that fashion. Now what's interesting is that there were some electeds up there that stated they did not want the police enforcement. There were those who said they did. And so what we said to the electeds, you must get together and then come up and be part of the plan. Let us know what you want. Because what we're finding over and over again, those who are representing the area must craft the plan that they both live with. Because we initiate through our agency's actions and you have electeds pushing back on us, that's not a productive relationship.

Question: That's what I was asking. If you could be at the table, because you're right. Some electeds, they don't want the criminalization of the issue. But just like the people left from 125th. If you happen to just ride through 124th Street now, all of that business has moved to one 124th Street now. So, it has to be a collective. And you're so personable and amicable. Seriously, this is not to... To be able because some elected officials, they may not want criminalization. Most of us don't, but then if you don't want that, what can we do collectively when you don't live on 125th, 124th? So it's easy to say what you don't want when you're living further up, where you're not dealing with all of that craziness.

Mayor Adams: I'll say, I didn't know that it was displaced to 124th. So I'll head up to Harlem and take a look at it and see what's going on.

Question: All the way down to [inaudible].

Mayor Adams: Okay. We'll take a look at it because we want to make sure that we pivot and shift to address the problem. And you're right, we cannot oversaturate one community with the safe injection sites. We do know these safe injection sites do produce a good product about preventing ODs. We're thinking about a different way of doing them. I have spoken with Deputy Mayor Williams-Isom and we are trying to pivot and shift to a new model. And I don't want to put it out there until we know if it could be done legally, but there's some laws that are preventing us from doing some of the things we want to do differently.

Question: Last question. Mr. Mayor. You mentioned that Rudolph Giuliani should be investigated for falsely reporting a crime? Do you still think that? And is there an investigation into the former mayor?

Mayor Adams: Think about what happened here. I don't know if many people really understand what happened here. The former mayor made several serious allegations. It was reported. He was videoed saying things that happened. Those things did not happen. Because of his report to the Police Department, a person went to jail for 24 hours. I don't know if people know what it's like being in jail when you did not commit a crime. You never get over that. This person's life has been changed because of what... As all of us saw, the pat on the back was not a punch to the head. It was not knocking someone to the ground. And I believe just as we've done in other cases where Karen incident happened in Central Park, in other incidents. I believe the DA should look at that and determine what the final outcome is.

Question: Was he wrongfully arrested?

Mayor Adams: Well, the DA must determine that. I am not the district attorney. The district attorney must make that determination. I just don't want to see innocent New Yorkers spend time in jail. Jail is not something we should use against innocent New Yorkers. Thank you.

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