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City of Buffalo suing gun industry members

Evan Anstey

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BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB) — Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown announced what was referred to as a “first of its kind” lawsuit against some members of the firearm industry.

The City of Buffalo says those named in the lawsuit include “manufacturers, distributors and other local gun shops.” Among them are Glock, Beretta, Remington and Smith & Wesson.

The reason for the lawsuit, according to the city, is “their conduct in fueling the gun violence crisis in the City of Buffalo.”

From 2018 to 2019, Buffalo Police Commissioner Joseph Gramaglia says there was a roughly 25 percent drop in shootings, with the final number being an estimated 188 or 189. But in 2020 and 2021, that number jumped upward, with Gramaglia saying there were 355 people shot each year.

Compared to this time in 2021 though, shootings in the city are down 35 percent.

“We are making progress, but it’s nowhere near enough progress,” Gramaglia said Tuesday morning.

The goal of this lawsuit, according to Mayor Brown, is not the prevention of legal gun ownership, but taking measures to fight illegal gun possession. According to the lawsuit, the city seeks to hold gun makers accountable for how weapons are marketed and distributed.

Gramaglia says that every year, roughly 800-950 guns are taken off the street. Last year, that number was around 850.

New York City filed a similar lawsuit to the one announced Tuesday, but Buffalo Corporation Counsel Cavette Chambers says it was targeted against ghost guns. Buffalo’s lawsuit is more expansive,

she says.

Ghost guns have risen in prevalence, based on how many the Buffalo Police Department collected in 2021 alone. From 2020 to 2021, there was a 1,300 percent increase in the number seized, going from 5 the first year to 70 in the second.

Commenting on 2022, Gramaglia says “Going through the first half of the year, we were tracking to beat last year’s number.”

A [Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions analysis of gun-related deaths](#), with data provided by the CDC, shows that firearm homicides in the U.S. increased by 35 percent from 2019 to 2020. The number of gun deaths that occurred in 2020 is 45,222.

Buffalo Police Commissioner Joseph Gramaglia says gun violence is a substantial drain on police resources.

— Evan Anstey (@AnsteyEvan) [December 20, 2022](#)

The lawsuit, [which you can read here](#), was filed in State Supreme Court. The city is seeking damages. *Watch the full conference announcing the lawsuit below:*

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Evan Anstey is an Associated Press Award, JANY Award and Emmy-nominated digital producer who has been part of the [News 4](#) team since 2015. [See more of his work here](#) and [follow him on Twitter](#).