



Written by [David Kelly](#) on August 25, 2023

## Missouri AG Puts St. Louis Mayor on Notice Over Proposed Gun Legislation

Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey put St. Louis City Mayor Tishaura Jones on notice this week after she [announced](#) plans to introduce legislation that would prohibit “military-grade weapons” on city streets and make it a crime for “insurrectionists and those convicted of hate crimes” to possess firearms.

A [press release](#) shared that Bailey sent Jones a [letter](#) stating that her “office’s proposed legislation would violate Missourians’ constitutional right to keep and bear arms.”

Bailey wrote:

Our state constitution guarantees that the right of law-abiding citizens to bear arms “shall be unalienable” and that “Any restriction on these rights shall be subject to **strict scrutiny** and the state of Missouri **shall be obligated to uphold these rights** and shall under no circumstances decline to protect against their infringement.”... The people’s elected representatives have already spoken on this issue by preempting local authority in state statute.... To implement your plan would be to violate Missouri law.



AP Images  
Andrew Bailey

According to the mayor’s office, on Tuesday, Jones “held a listening session with gun violence survivors and advocates to hear personally about the devastating toll gun violence takes on communities across St. Louis.” She was joined by Police Chief Robert J. Tracy, Office of Violence Prevention Director Wil Pinkney, and a number of city aldermen.

Following that meeting, the city [posted](#) this:

“In the coming days, in partnership with the Mayor’s Office, aldermen are ready to introduce commonsense gun safety legislation,” said Mayor Tishaura O. Jones. “We come together around a shared vision: a safer, stronger St. Louis, ready to stand up for our values. We know Missourians are demanding state-level action to pass measures like red-



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flag laws and background checks, but we are ready to try every tool available to us at the local level to protect families from gun violence.”

Jones’ announcement came three weeks after she had signed [BB29](#) and [BB82](#), which regulates open carry in the city and strengthens police accountability in regard to consent searches and transparency.

According to the city [press release](#), the new proposed legislation would:

- Prohibit military-grade weapons on our streets
- Prevent transfer or sale of guns to minors
- Take action on ghost guns and similar untraceable firearms
- Prepare St. Louis for the passage of Blair’s Law
- Prohibit insurrectionists and those convicted of hate crimes from having guns

In his notice to the mayor, Bailey stood firm in protecting state citizen’s gun rights, stating, “By this letter, let me be clear — I will zealously perform my constitutional duty to defend the rights of each law-abiding citizen to ‘keep and bear arms ... in defense of [their] home, person, family and property...’ which is the promise made to them by the Missouri Constitution.”

Fox News [shared](#) that “Bailey pointed to statements made by Jones in text messages that were obtained in an open records request last month. In one of the messages Jones texted in a group chat with her dad, Virus Jones, and advisor Richard Callow on March 21, the mayor said, ‘Chicago has strict gun laws as well, but that doesn’t deter gun violence.’”

The state attorney general exposed the hypocrisy of the mayor’s proposal in his letter, writing, “Not even you believe that your proposal is narrowly-tailored to actually stop crime, as evidenced by your statement” on Chicago’s strict gun laws.

Bailey’s letter continued, “Moreover, you have repeatedly blamed juveniles who open carry firearms as the major contributing factor of crime in your city, yet you have done nothing to use the statutes on the books to address those issues,” he wrote. “The fact that there are currently statutes on the books to address these issues further proves that your proposal will not survive strict scrutiny.”

In closing, the attorney general stated:

It is my hope that you will reverse course and use existing law to combat the crime plaguing your city, rather than choosing to target the rights of law-abiding Missourians. In other words, I encourage you to go after criminals, not guns. As the Attorney General for the State of Missouri, I will discharge my duties under the Constitution and resist any effort to infringe on the right of the people of Missouri to keep and bear arms.

To date, no official response to the attorney general’s letter has been posted by the mayor.



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