



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 23, 2023

## Illinois Gun Owners Refusing to Register Their Firearms

Despite the [“invitation”](#) by the Illinois State Police to gun owners holding semi-automatic firearms that will become illegal to own on January 1, 2024 to register them, [scarcely 4,600](#) of the more than 2.4 million holding FOID (firearms owner ID) cards have accepted the invitation.

The bill, which Illinois Governor JG Pritzker eagerly signed into law in January, was immediately challenged by numerous parties, including gun owners, gun dealers, and pro-Second Amendment political action groups. It bans the possession of more than 170 different types of semi-automatic weapons, but provides a “legacy” loophole.



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That loophole opened on October 1, and, as of this writing, just 3,000 gun registrations have been received by the police, with another 1,600 “accessory” registrations. That’s out of a total of 2,415,481 gun owners holding ID cards.

The excuse provided by Illinois anti-gun pols was the Highland Park shooting on July 4, 2022, where a mental case (who should have been singled out under the background-check system but wasn’t) climbed a ladder onto a building overlooking the July 4 parade and opened fire.

He dressed in women’s clothing to avoid capture, which explains the lag between the shooting and his arrest.

The pols focused not on the shooter and his mental problems and the failure of the background-check system to rein him in, but instead on the millions of Illinoisans who weren’t at the parade and weren’t involved in the shooting.

When the Supreme Court refused to put a hold on the ban back in May, pending the resolution of numerous lawsuits wending through lower courts, Pritzker celebrated:

The gun lobby has insisted on every legal maneuver to block this law, refusing to acknowledge that lives will be saved by this important piece of legislation.

Despite these challenges, I remain confident that the assault weapons ban will be upheld and will create a safer Illinois for our residents.

Aside from Pritzker’s odious characterization of the “gun lobby” as somehow only interested in the Second Amendment and not in criminals using firearms illegally, his confidence that his ban will be upheld will likely turn into an anti-gunner’s nightmare.

The Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution should be understood as it was by the Founders when it was being written, and not twisted by college law professors into a “living document” pretzel. The ruling in *Bruen (New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen)*, written by Supreme



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Court Justice Clarence Thomas, is in the process of changing the legal landscape:

When the Second Amendment's plain text covers an individual's conduct [here the right to bear arms], the Constitution presumptively protects that conduct.

The government must then justify its regulation by demonstrating that it is *consistent with the Nation's historical tradition of firearm regulation*. Only then may a court conclude that the individual's conduct falls outside the Second Amendment's "unqualified command."  
[Emphasis added.]

Pritzker need look no further than California to learn the fate of his anti-gun, anti-Second Amendment law. On October 19, U.S. District Judge Roger Benitez determined that California's ban on so-called assault weapons (i.e., semi-automatic firearms *not* designed for assault but *for* self-defense) found no equivalent in early American history, and therefore ruled it unconstitutional.

Wrote Benitez:

Guns and ammunition in the hands of criminals, tyrants and terrorists are dangerous; guns in the hands of law-abiding responsible citizens are necessary.

To give full life to the core right of self-defense, every law-abiding responsible individual citizen has a constitutionally protected right to keep and bear firearms commonly owned and kept for lawful purposes.

The State of California posits that its "assault weapon" ban, the law challenged here, promotes an important public interest of disarming some mass shooters even though it makes criminals of law-abiding residents who insist on acquiring these firearms for self-defense.

More than that is required to uphold a ban.

Dudley Brown, head of the National Association for Gun Rights (NAGR), was optimistic about the final interment of Pritzker's law:

Commonly owned weapons are protected by the Second Amendment, and banning them has to stop.

It will ultimately be decided by the Supreme Court, which will very soon be called upon to enforce their *Bruen* precedent on a nation full of lower courts determined to ignore both *Bruen* and the Second Amendment.



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