AB 1810 (Berman)

Firearm Industry Accountability

SUMMARY

AB 1810 would strengthen California's firearm laws to prevent illegal gun trafficking. This bill would authorize the California Department of Justice (DOJ) to hold firearm dealers accountable and crack down on firearms used or purchased illegally.

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is the primary federal agency tasked with inspecting firearm dealers, ensuring they comply with federal regulations and revoking the licenses of those individuals who fail to align with firearm industry best practices.

In California, nearly all firearm sales must go through a federally licensed firearms dealer, who also possesses a Certificate of Eligibility, and is authorized to sell in the state.[1] This ensures all firearm dealers in the state are following federal regulations, in addition to California's nation-leading firearm laws.

Under the current federal administration, the ATF's role in firearm regulation has been significantly diminished. In addition to a reduction in ATF's budget and staff, President Trump has reversed regulations to increase background checks and relaxed penalties for firearm dealers who break the law.[2] This has left the agency with little oversight over the firearm industry and opened the window for bad actors to purchase firearms illegally, putting the safety and well-being of Californians at risk.

From 2017 to 2021, over one million lost or stolen firearms were reported to authorities, according to ATF.[3] Of those, nearly 35,000 firearms were stolen from licensed dealers and another 13,145 were stolen in interstate shipments, which are often used to transport firearms between manufacturers and dealers.

A lost or stolen gun can end up in the hands of someone who should not possess one. When a firearm is illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected to have been used in a crime, it is called a crime gun.

The DOJ reports that in 2023, more than 12,000 firearms used in a crime were traced to a dealer.[4] On average, each dealer sold 10 crime guns, and 386 dealers were associated with only one crime gun. However, 50% of all traced firearms came from only 87 dealers.

THIS BILL

AB 1810 would provide the DOJ with the needed authority to hold firearm dealers in the state accountable and crack down on illegal crime guns.

[1] https://oag.ca.gov/ogvp/overview-firearm-law
[2] https://www.thetrace.org/2026/01/atf-trump-budget-director-gun-laws/
[3] https://www.atf.gov/media/15416/download
[4] https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ab1191-crime-gun-report-2024.pdf

AB 1810 would clarify the DOJ's authority to revoke a person or an entity's authorization to sell firearms in the state for failing to meet basic requirements to operate in the state. This includes failing to maintain the following:

- Federal Firearm License
- Local Business Licenses
- Seller's Permit issued by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration
- DOJ-issued Certificate of Eligibility

In addition, AB 1810 would authorize the DOJ to revoke licenses of dealers for failing to take corrective action on violations discovered by DOJ inspectors within 90 days.

Those who have had their authorization to sell revoked under the provisions of this bill would be fined and become ineligible to work for or engage in any business related to a firearm dealer for two years.

Finally, AB 1810 would also require the DOJ to annually inspect the top 10 dealer locations that have the highest percentage of recovered crime guns, provided that it is the source of at least 20 crime guns.

SUPPORT

GIFFORDS (sponsor)

OPPOSITION

None on File

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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