

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Statement on U.S. Supreme Court Ruling in NYS Rifle & Pistol Association et. al. v. Kevin P. Bruen

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society released the following statement in response to a United States Supreme Court ruling in [*New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. et. al v. Kevin P. Bruen, et. al.*](#) which found that New York’s concealed-carry gun licensing regulations violate the Second Amendment:

“New York’s gun licensing regulations have been arbitrarily and discriminatorily applied, disproportionately ensnaring the people we represent, the majority of whom are from communities of color, in the criminal legal system. This decision may be an affirmative step toward ending arbitrary licensing standards that have inhibited lawful Black and Brown gun ownership in New York.

In this moment and always, we must honor and remember people who have lost their lives to gun violence - the overwhelmingly majority of whom are from BIPOC communities. We must also name the white supremacist and anti-democratic agenda of the gun lobby and the NRA and the hate-filled tragedies that have taken the lives of so many in Buffalo and across this country.

As lawmakers consider next steps in response to this decision, let us be abundantly clear: it would amount to a historic disservice to both public safety and the best interests of New Yorkers for Albany to reproduce a regulatory scheme that perpetuates the same disparate outcomes yielded under the previous law or to further criminalize gun ownership. Criminalization has never prevented violence and serves only to further marginalize and incarcerate people from BIPOC communities.

The solution to public safety challenges can be found in the proven success of community-based, public-health models such as New York City’s Crisis Management System and Cure Violence initiative. Community investment must lead this conversation, not proposals that harken back to an era that fueled mass incarceration and made our communities less safe. New York must find a way forward that will promote *true* public safety, while preserving the constitutional rights of all citizens.”

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated

for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org