



State of New Jersey

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF LAW
PO Box 080
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0080

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

GURBIR S. GREWAL
Attorney General

Defense Distributed
2320 Donley Dr., Suite C
Austin, TX 78758

July 26, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

You are directed to cease and desist from publishing printable-gun computer files for use by New Jersey residents. The files you plan to publish offer individuals, including criminals, codes that they can use to create untraceable firearms—and even to make assault weapons that are illegal in my state. These computer codes are a threat to public safety, and posting them violates New Jersey’s public nuisance and negligence laws. If you do not halt your efforts to proceed with publication, I will bring legal action against your company before August 1, 2018.

The computer files that you plan to publish will undermine the public safety of New Jersey residents. These files allow anyone with a 3-D printer to download your code and create a fully operational gun. More than that, the codes you plan to post will enable individuals to print assault weapons that are illegal in New Jersey. And because the printed guns would not have serial numbers, they would not be traceable by law enforcement. Worst of all, you are going to make the codes available to everyone—regardless of age, criminal status, or history of mental illness. That would undermine New Jersey’s comprehensive scheme for keeping guns out of dangerous criminals’ hands, and it would undermine the safety of our residents.

Not only are your codes dangerous, but posting them would also be illegal. New Jersey’s law is clear: an individual who interferes with public health, safety, peace, and comfort violates our public nuisance law. *See James v. Arms Tech., Inc.*, 359 N.J. Super. 291, 329-33 (App. Div. 2003). As New Jersey courts have held, “[n]o one can seriously debate” that regulated guns are “dangerous instrumentalities” and thus implicate our public nuisance law. *Id.* at 320. So when a group of manufacturers “flood[ed] the gun market” through a high volume of sales, while failing to develop “reasonable safeguards over the distribution scheme” and “refus[ing] to oversee or supervise the control of handgun distribution in order to prevent the foreseeable channeling of guns to such an illegal market,” New Jersey courts found they could be held responsible when their actions “facilitate[d] the illegal sale of weapons to criminals and other unlawful users.” *Id.* at 312. That is what your actions will do as well—make do-it-yourself guns available to anyone, even if the individuals are prohibited from owning guns because of prior convictions, history of mental illness, or history of domestic violence, even if the weapons they print are illegal in my



state, and even if they plan to use their weapons to further crimes and acts of violence. Because your actions will flood the illegal firearms market and pose a direct threat to the public safety of my state, they constitute a public nuisance.

Worse still, your comments make clear that you hope your actions will undermine all the efforts of states like New Jersey to keep guns out of criminals' hands. You have stated, "All this Parkland stuff, the students, all these dreams of 'common sense gun reforms'? No. The internet will serve guns, the gun is downloadable."¹ You have also stated, "I'm not worried about public safety."² And on July 10, 2018, you tweeted a photo of a gravestone engraved with the words "American Gun Reform."³ These comments show that you have no intention of precluding your printable-gun computer files, including designs for assault weapons, from winding up in the hands of criminals, minors, and the mentally ill. Not only does that reveal a lack of regard for safety, but it also shows that your interference with the public's health and safety is intentional and per se unreasonable. *James*, 359 N.J. Super. at 330.

Finally, your widespread dissemination of printable-gun computer files is negligent because it encourages an illegal gun market, which will foreseeably lead to increased crime and violence in New Jersey, and which will lead to an increase in expenditures of public funds for combatting crime and protecting our resident's health. *See id.* at 308-24 (finding a legally valid negligence claim against same manufacturers of guns that flooded the illegal market). Your planned method of making codes available and your public comments show that you are ignoring and violating your duty. By broadly sharing an inherently dangerous product, you should reasonably foresee the resulting governmental and public costs and must bear them. *Id.* at 323-24.

As the chief law enforcement officer for New Jersey, I demand that you halt publication of the printable-gun computer files. Should you fail to comply with this letter, my Office will initiate legal action barring you from publishing these files before August 1, 2018.

Sincerely,



Gurbir S. Grewal
Attorney General

¹ Andy Greenberg, "A Landmark Legal Shift Opens Pandora's Box for DIY Guns," *Wired* (July 10, 2018), available at <https://www.wired.com/story/a-landmark-legal-shift-opens-pandoras-box-for-diy-guns/>.

² Tess Owen, "Get Ready for the New Era of 3D-Printed Guns Starting August 1," *Vice News* (July 18, 2018), available at https://news.vice.com/en_us/article/ev8xjn/get-ready-for-the-new-era-of-3d-printed-guns-starting-august-1.

³ Cody R. Wilson (@Radomysisky), *TWITTER* (July 10, 2018, 12:25 P.M.), <https://twitter.com/Radomysisky/status/1016765282017337344>.