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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Vermilion County State's Attorney Jacqueline Lacy joins Madison County State's Attorney Thomas Haine and 31 other State's Attorneys asking Supreme Court to strike down Assault Weapons Ban

The State's Attorneys of 32 counties have joined Madison County State's Attorney Thomas A. Haine in a brief he filed with the Illinois Supreme Court, seeking to overturn the state's ban on certain types of weapons. The *Amici Curiae* brief, also known as a "friend of the court" brief, asks the Supreme Court to strike down the state's so-called Assault Weapons Ban. The legislature passed the ban in January during a lame-duck session, and Gov. JB Pritzker signed it into law.

Haine is the lead attorney for the *Amici Curiae* brief. The other State's Attorneys joining him in the brief represent the following counties: Brown, Calhoun, Carroll, Clark, Clinton, Edwards, Effingham, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hancock, Henderson, Henry, Jasper, Jefferson, Jersey, Jo Daviess, Johnson, Macon, Marion, Mercer, Monroe, Ogle, Perry, Pulaski, Randolph, Schuyler, Union, Vermilion, Warren, Washington, Wayne and White.

In its conclusion, Haine's brief states as follows:

Many Americans of good will continue to debate the merits of our Country's broad-based culture of gun ownership. Some fear that broad gun rights facilitate violence by criminals. Others contend that while the law should take aggressive steps to stop criminals, it must also respect responsible citizens' right to own commonplace firearms as an effective means of self-defense against those very same criminals, making the public more secure, not less. While this debate will undoubtedly endure, at least this much has been settled since 1791: The Second Amendment—"the very product of an interest balancing by the" Founding generation, which ratified it—"elevates above all other interests the right of law-abiding, responsible citizens to use arms" for self-defense. Bruen, 142 S.Ct. at 2131 (citing Heller, 554 U.S. at 635). Therefore, no state may "prohibit[] ... an entire class of 'arms' that is overwhelmingly chosen by American society for [a] lawful purpose." Heller, 554 U.S. at 628. Yet the [Assault Weapons Ban] bans entire categories of firearms and firearm components (i.e., magazines) obviously in common use for lawful purposes today. It is unconstitutional under the Second Amendment, as authoritatively read by Heller and Bruen both. Certain firearms – like the AR-15 – may seem strange and menacing to those with little experience with firearms, but they are quite normal and valuable to many millions of responsible, law-abiding Americans. In fact, it is the experience of Amici as the chief law-enforcement officers of our respective Counties that the typical use of such firearms is self-defense and recreation—for which they are quite well-suited—and not violent crime.

Like all Americans, Amici are horrified by the mass shootings and urban violence our nation has experienced. These are heartbreaking reminders of how much pain and sorrow violent individuals with evil intentions can cause. As prosecutors, we go to work every day to deter such crimes, do justice for victims, put those who would do harm to our communities behind bars, and protect everyone by strengthening the justice system and the rule of law.

It is in service to that same rule of law that we urge this Honorable Court to support all the rights enshrined in our Constitution, including the right of the people to own commonplace firearms so they can defend hearth and home and live freely with the means to secure their own ultimate safety.

On March 3, Macon County Associate Judge Rodney S. Forbes ruled that the ban violates the equal-protection and special-legislation clauses of the Illinois Constitution. Pritzker is appealing to the state Supreme Court. The ban outlaws the sale or manufacture of several firearms labeled as “assault weapons” and certain attachments for firearms, along with .50-caliber rifles and .50-caliber cartridges.

People who already own such a firearm are allowed to keep them under the new law, but the owners of such weapons will be required to register them with Illinois State Police by Jan. 1, 2024.

“As the duly-elected State’s Attorney of Vermilion County, I took an Oath to seek justice and defend the Constitutional rights of all citizens of our County, stated Vermilion County State’s Attorney, Jacqueline M. Lacy. The brief is posted at the website of the Madison County State’s Attorney’s Office, www.madcosao.gov, Vermilion County State’s Attorney’s Office, www.vercounty.org, and on the Illinois Supreme Court’s web page for high-profile cases <https://www.illinoiscourts.gov/supreme-court/courts-supreme-court-high-profile-cases>.

The State’s Attorneys joining in the brief are:

- Michael Hill, State’s Attorney of Brown County
- Lucas Fanning, State’s Attorney of Calhoun County
- Aaron Kaney, State’s Attorney of Carroll County
- Kyle Hutson, State’s Attorney of Clark County
- J.D. Brandmeyer, State’s Attorney of Clinton County
- Eric St. Ledger, State’s Attorney of Edwards County
- Aaron Jones, State’s Attorney of Effingham County
- Douglas Dyhrkopp, State’s Attorney of Gallatin County
- Justin Hood, State’s Attorney of Hamilton County
- Bobi James, State’s Attorney of Hancock County
- Rachel Mast, State’s Attorney of Henderson County
- Catherine Runty, State’s Attorney of Henry County
- James Treccia, State’s Attorney of Jasper County
- Sean Featherstun, State’s Attorney of Jefferson County
- Ben Goetten, State’s Attorney of Jersey County
- Chris Allendorf, State’s Attorney of Jo Daviess County
- Tandra Cain, State’s Attorney of Johnson County
- Scott Rueter, State’s Attorney of Macon County
- Tim Hudspeth, State’s Attorney of Marion County
- Grace Simpson, State’s Attorney of Mercer County
- Ryan Webb, State’s Attorney of Monroe County
- Mike Rock, State’s Attorney of Ogle County
- David Searby, State’s Attorney of Perry County
- Lisa Casper, State’s Attorney of Pulaski County
- James Kelley, State’s Attorney of Randolph County
- Chuck Laegeler, State’s Attorney of Schuyler County
- Tyler Tripp, State’s Attorney of Union County
- Jacqueline Lacy, State’s Attorney of Vermilion county
- Thomas Siegel, State’s Attorney of Warren County
- Daniel Janowski, State’s Attorney of Washington County
- Kevin Kakac, State’s Attorney of Wayne County
- Denton Aud, State’s Attorney of White County