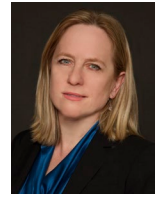




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QUEENS MAN CHARGED WITH POSSESSING CACHE OF GHOST GUNS, ASSAULT PISTOLS

Face Up to 15 Years in Prison

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Lenold Caesar was arraigned on charges of criminal possession of a weapon and other crimes after a search warrant executed at his Cambria Heights home uncovered ghost guns, including assault weapons, as well as silencers and other weapons-related paraphernalia.

District Attorney Katz said: “Illegal firearms cause unspeakable tragedies in our communities. I have prioritized taking guns off the street and will continue fighting the growth in ghost gun trafficking, a deeply troubling trend that threatens to make an already pervasive gun violence problem much worse. That is why this case is important and why my office is a leader in the fight against ghost guns.”

Queens has led New York City in total ghost gun recoveries since 2021. Last year, Queens led with 113, or 31%, of the 359 ghost gun recoveries citywide. Since 2021, District Attorney Katz’s efforts to rid the city of ghost guns has resulted in the recovery of 351 firearms, 875 high-capacity magazines, seven 3D printers, and more than 113,000 rounds of ammunition.

Caesar, 43, of 235th Street in Cambria Heights, was arraigned last night on a 33-count complaint charging him with criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, eight counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree, five counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree, five counts of criminal possession of a firearm, 11 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree and three counts of criminal possession of a rapid-fire modification device.

Criminal Court Judge Anthony Battisti ordered Caesar to return to court on February 2. If convicted, he faces up to 15 years in prison.

According to the charges:

- Members of the Queens District Attorney’s office conducted a long-term investigation into Caesar’s purchase of polymer-based, unserialized firearm components, which are easily assembled into operable ghost guns.
- On January 30, officers from the NYPD and the Queens District Attorney’s Detective Bureau executed a court-authorized search warrant at Caesar’s residence and recovered:
 - Five ghost gun pistols, three of which had assault weapon characteristics, such as detachable

- magazines coupled with threaded barrels
- Four silencers
- One short barrel rifle conversion kit
- Three rapid-fire modification devices, also known as “Glock Switches” or “Auto Sears,” capable of converting a semi-automatic pistol into a fully automatic machine gun
- Six lower receiver/grip modules
- Two slides
- One receiver
- Three barrels
- Two drills and other tools used to make ghost guns
- 12 ammunition-feeding devices

The investigation was conducted by members of the District Attorney’s Detective Bureau under the supervision of Sergeant Joseph Oliver and Lieutenants Janet Helgeson and Joseph Falgiano, and under the overall supervision of Assistant Chief of Detectives Daniel O’Brien.

Also taking part in the investigation were NYPD Major Case Field Intelligence Detectives Mike Billotto, Victor Cardona, Paul Molinaro, John Schultz, Christopher Thomas, John Uske and Sergeant Christopher Schmitt, under the supervision of Sergeants Bogdan Tabor and Captain Christian Jara, and under the overall supervision of Inspector Courtney Nilan.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Bello, of the District Attorney’s Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau, is prosecuting the case, with assistance from Supervising Intelligence Analyst Jennifer Rudy, and Intelligence Analyst Joanna Ceballos, under joint supervision of Assistant District Attorney Shanon LaCorte, Bureau Chief, and Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Sennett, Bureau Chief of the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau, under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard Brave.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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