1 C.D. Michel - SBN 144258 Sean A. Brady - SBN 262007 Matthew D. Čubeiro - SBN 291519 2 MICHEL & ASSOCIATES, P.C. 3 180 E. Ocean Blvd., Suite 200 Long Beach, CA 90802 Telephone: (562) 216-4444 Facsimile: (562) 216-4445 4 5 Email: cmichel@michellawyers.com Clerk of the Court Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara Attorneys for Petitioners-Plaintiffs 6 DEPUTY 7 S. VERA 8 IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA 9 FOR THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA 10 Case No. 2 0 C V 3 6 5 8 4 0 LOKEY FIREARMS, a sole proprietorship; 11 FFLGUARD, LLC, a Delaware limited 12 liability company; and CALIFORNIA RIFLE MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND & PISTOL ASSOCIATION. AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT OF EX INCORPORATED, a California corporation, 13 PARTE APPLICATION TO STAY ENFORCEMENT OF SANTA CLARA Petitioners-Plaintiffs. 14 ORDER REQUIRING LICENSED FIREARM DEALERS TO CLOSE OR ALTERNATIVELY, FOR TEMPORARY 15 RESTRAINING ORDER AND ORDER TO COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA; SARA H. 16 **SHOW CAUSE** CODY, M.D., in her official capacity as Health Officer of the County of Santa Clara; 17 Hearing Date: **TBA** LAURIE SMITH, in her official capacity as Hearing Time: **TBA** Sheriff of the County of Santa Clara; 18 Department: TBA JEFFREY ROSEN, in his official capacity as 19 District Attorney for the County of Santa Clara; and DOES 1-25. 20 Respondents-Defendants. 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

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## MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

Petitioners-Plaintiffs wish to begin by noting that they are aware of and appreciate the unprecedented challenges that municipalities across the globe, including and perhaps particularly the County of Santa Clara, are facing as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic. They understand that officials are doing their best in uncharted waters, a daunting endeavor to be sure. That said, even in trying times like these, we remain a country governed by law and order. Indeed, an ordered legal system is potentially more important in times of crisis and should not be abandoned during them. It should instead be firmly asserted not only to prevent abuse and indiscretion by those entrusted with the power to regulate, but also to reassure the citizenry that we remain secure in our institutions. While government has, and should have, more leeway in times of emergency, it cannot abrogate limits on its authority in the name of public safety, even if its intentions are noble. That, however, is precisely what Respondents have done regardless of their intentions. Petitioners-Plaintiffs respectfully urge this Court to restore those limits.

The County of Santa Clara, County Health Officer Sara H. Cody, M.D., Sheriff Laurie Smith, and District Attorney Jeffrey Rosen (collectively "Defendants" or "Respondents" or "the County") recently enacted and are now enforcing a county-wide prohibition on the operation of stores that sell firearms. Stores licensed to sell firearms in Santa Clara County, an organization dedicated to representing the interests of licensed firearm dealers, and a civil rights organization representing individuals who seek to buy or have bought but cannot take receipt of a firearm in the County, sued for a writ of mandate and declaratory and injunctive relief to bar the County from enforcing the prohibition because it directly contravenes a state-issued order for certain businesses to remain operational during the COVID-19 crisis, is unequivocally preempted under this Court's precedent, and violates the California Constitution's due process mandates. To be clear, this case is not about whether the County's policy being challenged is a good idea or whether it is likely to serve its laudable goal of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Instead, this case presents the narrow legal question of whether local officials remain subject to general state law on their authority to act when acting under emergency powers limitations.

Petitioners are subject to criminal and civil penalties for continuing to operate gun stores

under the County's current policy. Ex parte relief is necessary to prevent Petitioners from being irreparably harmed by having to choose between the risk of criminal and civil penalties or compliance with an unlawful measure that could mean their permanent demise for some of them or the unreasonable and indefinite deprivation of their property for others.

#### STATEMENT OF FACTS

#### I. CALIFORNIA'S STATUTORY SCHEME FOR FIREARM SALES

Virtually all lawful firearm transactions conducted in California must be processed by a properly licensed firearms dealer ("FFL"). (Pen. Code, §§ 26500, 27545.) To become an FFL, one must obtain a federal license, any necessary local license, a valid seller's from the State Board of Equalization, and a valid certificate of eligibility from the California Department of Justice, Bureau of Firearms ("DOJ"), and be listed on DOJ's Centralized List of Firearm Dealers. (Pen. Code, §§ 27600-27705; see also Cal. Code Regs. tit. 11, §§ 4016-4024.) Such licenses must be renewed annually. (Pen. Code, §§ 27600-26705; see also Cal. Code Regs. tit. 11, §§ 4016-4024.)

To even attempt to purchase a firearm in California, one must have a valid firearm safety certificate ("FSC") obtained from a DOJ certified FSC instructor. (Pen. Code, §§ 27540, 31610-31670.) Obtaining an FSC requires passing a written test and paying a fee. (Pen. Code, § 31645, subd. (a), 31650.) A prospective firearm purchaser must provide the FFL with evidence of an FSC, identity, and age. (Pen. Code, § 27540.) This information is entered into a Dealer Record of Sale ("DROS"). (Pen. Code, § 28205 subd. (c).) A DROS is submitted to DOJ through the DROS Entry System ("DES"). (Pen. Code, §, 28205 subd. (c); see also Cal. Code Regs., tit. 11 §§ 4200-4240.) Generally, only FFLs have access to DES and can submit a DROS to DOJ. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 11 § 4210, subd. (a).) DOJ uses the DROS to examine records to determine the purchaser's eligibility to possess firearms for the mandatory background check. (Pen. Code, § 28220.) The purchaser must pay a \$31.19 fee together with other required fees for this process. (Pen. Code, § 28233, subd. (a).) After purchasing a firearm, one usually must return to the FFL at least 10 days later before taking receipt. (Pen. Code, § 27540, subd. (a).) If the purchaser passes the background check and completes a safe-handling demonstration, the FFL will release the firearm to the purchaser, along with a DOJ-approved firearm safety device. (Pen. Code, § 23635.)

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Nothing in state law expressly grants local government or officials the authority to ban firearm sales within their jurisdictions. State law does, however, make clear that "[n]o permit or license to *purchase*, own, possess, keep, or carry, either openly or concealed, shall be required of any United States Citizen or legal resident over the age of 18" in California who is not otherwise prohibited from owning or possessing firearms. (Pen. Code, § 25605, subd. (b).)

#### II. STATE EMERGENCY ORDERS

In response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency on March 4, 2020. (See Req. for Jud. Not. ("RJN"), Ex. A.) On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20 directing Californians "to immediately heed the current State public health directives" developed by the Department of Public Health. (RJN, Ex. B.) Executive Order N-33-20 contains an order from the State Public Health Officer and Director indefinitely ordering "all individuals living in the State of California to stay home or at their place of residence except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of the federal critical infrastructure sectors ...." (Ibid.) That order clarified that workers in "16 critical infrastructure sectors" identified by the federal government "may continue their work because of the importance of these sectors to Californian's health and well-being." (Ibid.; see also RJN, Ex. C.) At the time of the Governor's order, firearm retailers were not expressly listed in the federal guidelines his order references. Instead, the federal guidelines broadly included all "retail" businesses in the "Commercial Facilities Sector," one of the "16 critical infrastructure sectors." (RJN, Ex. M.) Even so, some local agencies ordered firearm retailers closed. As a result, on March 28, 2020, the Director of the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency ("CISA"), issued an advisory memorandum clarifying that CISA considers "workers supporting the operation of firearm or ammunition product manufacturers, retailers, importers, distributors, and shooting ranges" to be part of the nation's "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce." (RJN, Ex. D.)

On March 25, 2020, Governor Newsom was asked if his office would clarify whether California FFLs are "essential businesses" allowed to remain open during the COVID-19 crisis. In response, the Governor stated that he would "defer to the sheriff in this instance, and [] defer to sheriffs in their respective jurisdictions for that clarification." (See Brady Decl., Ex. 2.)

#### III. SANTA CLARA'S POLICY ORDERING GUN STORES TO CLOSE

The County's Public Health Officers announced a legal order directing residents to shelter at home for three weeks beginning March 17, 2020, except for conducting "essential activities." (See RJN, Ex. E.) At the time, the order defined "essential activities" as those "necessary for the health and safety for individuals and their families." (*Ibid.*) The order did not expressly list FFLs operating in Santa Clara County among these activities. (*Ibid.*)

On March 30, 2020, the County issued a joint press release with neighboring counties stating they updated their existing shelter at home order to be extended until at least May 1, 2020. (See RJN, Ex. F.) The next day, the County issued an updated order extending it until May 3, 2020. (RJN, Ex. G.) This new order also added "clarifying language around essential business and activities, as well as some new directives." (*Ibid.*) Once again, however, the order did not expressly list FFLs operating in the County among those activities considered essential. (*Ibid.*) Failure to comply with the County's order "constitutes an imminent threat and menace to public health, constitutes a public nuisance, and is punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both." (*Ibid.*)

On April 1, the Office of the District Attorney of Santa Clara County ordered Petitioner Lokey Firearms to close its retail store or face civil and criminal penalties ("County's Order"). (Decl. David Lokey Supp. Ex Parte Appn. For OSC & TRO ("Lokey Decl."), ¶ 6.) An attorney at the District Attorney's office late told Petitioner-Plaintiff's counsel that if Lokey opens for retail sales, it will be subject to civil and criminal penalties. (Lokey Decl., ¶ 6.) Fearing such penalties for refusing to comply with the County's order, Petitioner Lokey closed its store. (Lokey Decl., ¶ 7.) Respondents also maintain a website that, as of April 6, 2020, states that firearm retailers "are not essential businesses under [the County's] Order." (RJN Ex. L.)

#### ARGUMENT

#### I. LEGAL STANDARD

The primary purpose of interim injunctive relief—whether a stay of enforcement or a temporary or preliminary injunction—is to preserve the status quo until a court can make a final determination on the merits of the action. (See *Contl. Baking Co. v. Katz* (1968) 68 Cal.2d 512.)

The test most often used by California trial courts in deciding whether to issue such relief requires

the evaluation of two interrelated factors: (1) the likelihood that plaintiff will succeed on the merits of its claims; and (2) the harm that plaintiff is likely to suffer if injunctive relief does not issue, balanced against the harm that the defendant is likely to suffer if it does issue. (*Cohen v. Bd. of Supervisors* (1985) 40 Cal.3d 277, 286 (*Cohen*).) When addressing these factors, the plaintiff must prove the likelihood that it will suffer immediate and irreparable harm. (*Triple A Mach. Shop, Inc. v. California* (1989) 213 Cal.App.3d 131, 138.)

#### II. PLAINTIFFS ARE LIKELY TO SUCCEED ON THE MERITS OF THEIR CLAIMS

# A. The County Is in Violation of a State Order

The County's Order barring lawful firearm sales violates the State Public Health Officer and Director's March 19, 2020 order that Californians working in "16 critical infrastructure sectors" identified by the federal government "may continue their work because of the importance of these sectors to Californian's health and well-being" ("Health Department's Order"). (RJN, Ex. B.) Gun stores fall within those federally identified critical sectors. Any doubt on that score has been removed by the memorandum CISA issued clarifying what it considers among those sectors, which lists "workers supporting the operation of firearm or ammunition product manufacturers, retailers, importers, distributors, and shooting ranges." (RJN, Ex. D.)

To be sure, under federal law, CISA's "list is advisory in nature" and "is not, nor should it be considered, a *federal* directive." (RJN D, italics added.) In California, however, it has the effect of a mandatory directive. This is because the Health Department's Order incorporates federal guidelines as mandates by stating that Californians working in the "16 critical infrastructure sectors" the federal government has identified must be allowed to continue working. (RJN, Ex. B.) Because federal guidelines include firearm stores among those critical sectors, the Health Department's Order protects Petitioner Lokey's' operation of its store.

State law compels Respondents' compliance with the Health Department's Order allowing gun stores to operate. That order was mandated by the Governor's Executive Order N-33-20. (See RJN, Ex. B [directing residents to "heed the current State public health directives," which the Governor "ordered the Department of Public Health to develop."].) As such, it is part of the Governor's order and controlling over all public entities per the statutes expressly referenced in the

Governor's order. (RJN, Ex. B, citing Gov. Code, § 8627 ["During a state of emergency the Governor shall, to the extent he deems necessary, have complete authority over all agencies of the state government and the right to exercise within the area designated all police power vested in the state by the Constitution and laws of the State of California in order to effectuate the purposes of [the California Emergency Services Act]. In exercise thereof, he shall promulgate, issue, and enforce such orders and regulations as he deems necessary, in accordance with the provisions of [Government Code] Section 8567"], and Gov. Code, § 8567, subd. (a) ["The Governor may make, amend, and rescind orders and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of [the California Emergency Services Act]. The orders and regulations shall have the force and effect of law."], italics added.) "Orders . . . issued during a . . . state of emergency shall be in writing and shall take effect immediately upon their issuance." (Gov. Code, § 8567, subd. (b).)

Even if the Health Department's Order does not carry the force of the Governor's order, it independently compels local authorities' compliance with its provisions. (See Health & Saf. Code, § 120195 ["Each health officer *shall* enforce all orders, rules, and regulations concerning quarantine or isolation prescribed or directed by the [State Department of Health Services]]," italics added.)¹ Indeed, the order incorporates Government Code section 8665, making it a crime for *anyone* to violate it. (RJN, Ex. B.) The lack of any exemption for local officials here suggests none exists. (*Safer v. Superior Court (Trom)* (1975) 15 Cal.3d 230.) The legislature knows how to exempt municipal officials from criminal statutes. (See, e.g., Pen. Code, § 27600, subd. (a).)

The County may argue that because the Health Department's Order was issued before CISA expressly clarified that gun stores are within the "critical infrastructure sectors," the order does not cover gun stores because CISA's clarification constitutes a later modification to the incorporated federal guidelines. (See *Gonzalez v. City of Norwalk*, (2018) 17 Cal.App.5th 1295, 1311 [stating the general rule that "where a statute adopts by specific reference the provisions of another statute, regulation, or ordinance, such provisions are incorporated in the form in which they exist at the time of the reference and not as subsequently modified"].) But that argument must fail for at least two reasons.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Health & Safety Code sections 20-21, for definitions of "Department" and "Director."

 First, gun stores were never expressly excluded from federal guidelines and were, at least arguably, already included in CISA's guidelines when the Health Department's Order originally issued. (See *supra*, Statement of Facts, Section II, p. 8; RJN, Ex. M [noting the federal guidelines broadly included all "retail" businesses in the "Commercial Facilities Sector," one of the "16 critical infrastructure sectors"].) CISA's clarification thus did not modify federal guidelines. Second, the general rule disallowing retroactive incorporation does not apply here. Instead, the rule "that where the reference is general instead of specific, such as a reference to a system or body of laws or to the general law relating to the subject in hand, the referring statute takes the law or laws referred to not only in their contemporary form, but also as they may be changed from time to time ..." applies. (*Palermo v. Stockton Theatres*, (1948) 32 Cal.2d 53, 59.) The Health Department's Order does not reference a fixed federal provision, but merely cites an interactive link to CISA's website, which can be, and was, updated. (*See RJN*, Exs. B, C.)

Construing the Health Department's Order as incorporating later changes to CISA's guidelines is also consistent with state policy that emergency measures take into account federal action. (See Gov. Code, § 8567, subd. (a) ["Due consideration shall be given to the plans of the federal government in preparing the orders and regulations" for an emergency].) Significantly, Los Angeles County Sheriff Villanueva and Culver City have retracted their respective orders to close gun stores given CISA's memorandum. (RJN, Exs. H, I, J.) And, the State has kept its firearm-transfer workforce and systems at DOJ functioning. (Lokey Decl., ¶ 10.)

In short, the State of California has issued an order that Californians must follow federal guidelines in closing down segments of the economy because of the threat from COVID-19. The federal guidelines include gun stores among those crucial parts of the federal infrastructure that should remain open. Petitioners are thus likely to succeed in showing that the County's Order requiring gun stores to close contradicts the State's order and is void and unenforceable.

## B. The County's Order Is Preempted by State Law

The California Constitution commands that a county or city must take care not to fall "in conflict with general laws." (Cal. Const. art. XI, § 7.) Courts have interpreted this as a limitation on local government's ability to interfere with the proper operation of state law through local

legislation. (*Agnew v. City of Los Angeles* (1958) 51 Cal.2d 1.) In short, a local law "[i]s invalid if it attempts to impose additional requirements in a field that is preempted by the general law." (*In re Lane* (1962) 58 Cal.2d 99, 102.) In determining whether a measure is preempted, courts ask if it "duplicates, contradicts, or enters an area fully occupied by general law, either expressly or by legislative implication." (*Sherwin-Williams Co. v. City of Los Angeles* (1993) 4 Cal.4th 893, 897.)

Because California law generally requires firearm transfers be processed through California-licensed FFLs (see *supra*, Statement of Facts, Part I, p. 3), the County's Order requiring all FFL stores to close is effectively a ban on the sale of firearms. Well over a decade ago, the California Court of Appeal held that state law preempts local bans on selling firearms on various grounds. (*Fiscal v. City and County of San Francisco* (2008) 158 Cal. App. 4th 895, 911-914.) Of particular note here, the *Fiscal* Court held that to sell firearms a business must have a federal and state license and that a local ban on selling firearms "effectively cancels all of these licenses" and thus "contravenes Government Code section 5307." (*Id.* at p. 912.) That the County's Order is temporary does not change this. It remains a ban that is now in place, and it is indefinite. In any event, Government Code section 53071 does not merely seek to preempt firearm bans. Rather, it preempts any local regulation even "relating" to licensing firearms. The County's Order relates to Petitioner Lokey's license and to the registration of the firearms it will not allow to be released to their owners. The only question remaining, therefore, is whether there is any other state law provision that exempts the County's Order from *Fiscal*'s preemptive effect. There is not.

Respondents are expected to point to the following state law provisions as exempting the County's Order from *Fiscal*'s preemptive effect:

- "The local health officer may take any preventive measure that may be necessary to protect and preserve the public health from any public health hazard during any . . . . 'state of emergency . . . within his or her jurisdiction." (Health & Saf. Code, § 101040, subd. (a).)
- "Each health officer knowing or having reason to believe that any case of the
  diseases made reportable by regulation of the department, or any other contagious,
  infectious or communicable disease exists, or has recently existed, within the
  territory under his or her jurisdiction, shall take measures as may be necessary to
  prevent the spread of the disease or occurrence of additional cases." (Health & Saf.
  Code, § 120175, italics added.)
- "[T]he local health officer may issue orders to other governmental entities within

the local health officer's jurisdiction to take any action the local health officer deems necessary to control the spread of the communicable disease." (Health & Saf. Code, § 120175.5, subd. (b).)<sup>2</sup>

While on their face these provisions seemingly confer unfettered discretion on local officials (i.e., health officers) to act in combating dangerous infectious-diseases like COVID-19, that is not the case. There are indeed limits, which the County's Order has exceeded.

A 1995 Attorney General Opinion explained in detail why the first of the three provisions referenced above, section 101040,<sup>3</sup> remains subject to preemption principles, despite its broad language. (78 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 171 (1995).) The opinion analyzes language from two statutes, stating that a health officer: (1) "may promulgate orders and regulations necessary to provide for the protection of life and property . . ."; and (2) "may take any preventive measure which may be necessary to protect and preserve the public health . . .." (*Id.* at p. 174, citations omitted.)

In finding that those provisions remain subject to general law preemption, the opinion first notes that "the broad powers based on a declaration of local emergency cannot be construed literally to encompass 'any' orders, regulations, or preventive measures in violation of state law or policy." (78 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. at p. 175.) Rather, "in the execution of a particular statutory responsibility imposed by [the two provisions analyzed], those charged with their administration must take cognizance of and effectuate, or at least refrain from acting in derogation of, other valid governmental policies." (*Ibid.*) And, "[i]t is well settled that statutory provisions must be construed with reference to the whole system of law of which they are a part so that all may be harmonized and have effect." (*Ibid.*, citing *Walmut Creek Manor v. Fair Employment & Housing Com.* (1991) 54 Cal.3d 245, 268.) Having effectively identical language as the provisions the opinion analyzes, the three above provisions are subject to these same principles, they are limited by general law.

Relatedly, the opinion next points out that the two provisions it analyzes concern actions by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Health officer" includes county, city, and district health officers, and city and district health boards, including their designees. (Health & Saf. Code, §§ 120100, 120115.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Opinion refers to section 101040's predecessor "§ 458" which section 101040 replaced in 1995. (See Sen. Bill No. 1360 (1995-1996 Reg. Sess.).) Relevant here, the Opinion also refers to "section 3110" which is the predecessor to Health & Safety Code section 120175 (the second of the three potentially relevant provisions noted above) and does not try to distinguish it from section 101040, suggesting it would be treated similarly. (*Id.* at p. 174, fn. 3.)

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county health officers and that counties' authority is limited to only adopting "orders not in conflict with general laws." (78 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. at p. 173 [referencing "450" which is the former iteration of Health and Safety Code section 101025], see Sen. Bill No. 1360 (1995-1996 Reg. Sess.).) Such a limitation, the Attorney General Opinion concludes, "do[es] not suggest an authority to disregard the general laws of the state," despite the broad terms of the individual provisions. (*Id.* at p. 175.) To the contrary, as explained above, local health officers *shall* enforce state orders about isolation. (Cal. Health & Saf. Code, § 120195.)

Finally, the opinion finds relevant that neither provision it analyzes contains an express exemption from general law. (78 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. at p. 176.) It explains that "when the Legislature has intended to authorize the suspension of state laws, it has done so in specific and unmistakable terms, rather than by inference or implication." (*Ibid.*) The lack of express authority to act beyond general law in those provisions, the opinion concludes, "indicates an intent not to confer such authorization upon local entities." (Ibid.) None of the three potentially relevant provisions here contains such an express exemption. To the contrary, as noted above, they are arguably subject to an express limitation to adhere to general law. Revealingly, the opinion cites the statute prescribing the Governor's powers during a state of emergency as "an illuminating example of the language [the Legislature] uses when it grants an exemption from compliance with state law." (Ibid., citing Gov. Code, § 8627 ["During a state of war emergency or a state of emergency the Governor may suspend any regulatory statute, or statute prescribing the procedure for conduct of state business . . . where the Governor determines and declares that strict compliance with any statute . . . would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the emergency."].) This not only establishes that the three provisions analyzed here should not be read as exempt from general law restrictions in the abstract, but also shows there is a mechanism by which cities can be unrestrained from general law in this specific context, by order of the Governor—an order the Governor has not made to date.

Each of the points raised in the opinion contradicts any argument that Respondents are exempt from general law preemption principles in exercising their emergency powers. While Attorney General opinions are not binding on this Court, they generally are persuasive authority.

(See *Cal. Assn. of Psych. Providers v. Rank* (1990) 51 Cal.3d 1, 17.) This particular opinion is persuasive in its reasoning, and the Court should follow it here. In sum, the County's Order is preempted under *Fiscal*. None of the emergency powers the Respondents may enjoy changes that. Thus, Petitioners are likely to succeed on the merits of their Third through Eighth causes of action.

# C. The County's Order Violates California's Due Process Requirements

The California Constitution provides that: "A person may not be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law . . . ." (Cal. Const., art. I § 7(a).) "The concept of 'due process of law' guarantees both procedural and substantive rights." (*Bottini v. City of San Diego* (2018) 27 Cal. App. 5th 281, 315 (*Bottini*); see Cal. Const. Art. I, § 7(a).) The County's Order violates both these due process protections.

"At a minimum, whenever property is taken, [procedural] due process requires some form of notice and hearing." (*Tyler v. County of Santa Clara* (1995) 34 Cal.App.4th 777, 783.) By prohibiting firearm sales, the County's Order indefinitely deprives Petitioner Lokey use of its federal and state licenses to sell firearms. FFLs like Lokey can only have their license revoked following a hearing. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 11, § 4024, subd. (b); see also Govt. Code, §§ 11500-11530.) In general, the holder of a license that cannot be revoked without cause has a property interest in that license. (See, e.g., *Sulla v. Bd. of Regis. Nursing* (2012) 205 Cal.App.4th 1195.)Yet the County provided Lokey neither notice nor hearing before ordering it to cease operations. The County has thus effectively revoked Lokey's duly acquired licenses without due process.

Additionally, individuals are being denied their property without either notice or hearing, nor any reasonable explanation. When a firearm is purchased, the purchaser must return to the FFL no sooner than 10 days to take possession of it. (See *supra*, Statement of Facts, Part I, p. 3.) Individuals who bought firearms before the County's Order took effect that are now in the possession of an FFL are being deprived of access to their property by the County's Order because they cannot take receipt of lawfully purchased firearms. (See Lokey Decl., ¶¶ 8-9.)

The County may argue that its order is not "adjudicative" but "legislative," and because procedural due process does not generally apply to legislative action, Petitioners' claim must fail. (*Calvert v. County of Yuba* (2006) 145 Cal. App. 4th 613, 622-623.) But the County's Order is not

 "a broad, generally applicable rule of conduct on the basis of a general public policy." (San Diego Bldg. Contractors Assn. v. City Council (1974) 13 Cal.3d 205, 212-213 [defining legislative action].) Rather, the County has chosen to affect individuals "determined by facts peculiar to the individual case." (Horn v. County of Ventura (1979) 24 Cal.3d 605, 613 [defining adjudicative action].) The County's Order targets gun sales specifically as an impermissible consumer activity during the COVID-19 crisis while permitting all sorts of other consumer activities. (RJN, Ex. G.)

The County's Order also violates due process because it is the epitome of arbitrariness. "Substantive due process protects against 'arbitrary legislative action, ....' [Citation.] To satisfy substantive due process concerns, 'the law must not be unreasonable, arbitrary or capricious but must have a real and substantial relation to the object sought to be attained." (*Bottini*, *supra*, 27 Cal.App.5th at 315; see also 420 Caregivers, LLC v. City of Los Angeles (2012) 219 Cal.App.4th 1316, 1342; and Jew Ho v. Williamson (1900) 103 F.10.) Respondents have no legitimate basis for denying some their constitutional right to self-defense and property, while allowing others to frequent liquor or hardware stores. (RJN, Ex. H.) The County's Order is thus invalid for violating the California Constitution's due process requirements and Petitioners are likely to succeed on their Ninth Cause of Action.

#### III. THE BALANCE OF HARMS TIPS SHARPLY IN PETITIONERS' FAVOR

The Court must next balance the harm Petitioners are likely to suffer if injunctive relief does not issue against the harm the County is likely to suffer if it does. (*Cohen, supra*, 40 Cal.3d at p. 286.) In striking that balance, courts can consider *any* of several factors: "(1) the inadequacy of any other remedy; (2) the degree of irreparable injury the denial of the injunction will cause; (3) the necessity to preserve the status quo; [and] (4) the degree of adverse effect on the public interest or interests of third parties the granting of the injunction will cause." (*Id.* at p. 286, fn. 5.)

# A. Absent Preliminary Relief, Plaintiffs Will Suffer Irreparable Harm Without Adequate Remedy at Law

"To qualify for preliminary injunctive relief plaintiffs must show irreparable injury, either existing or threatened." (*City of Torrance v. Transl. Living Ctrs. for L.A.* (1982) 30 Cal.3d 516, 526, citing 7978 Corp. v. Pitchess (1974) 41 Cal. App.3d 42, 46; see also Code Civ. Proc., § 526,

 subd. (a)(2).) Irreparable harm is present when a plaintiff will suffer an injury for which adequate compensation is difficult, if not impossible, to establish. (*Wind v. Herbert* (1960) 186 Cal.App.2d 276, 285, citing Civ. Code, § 3422.) The City's conduct has caused and, unless enjoined, will continue to cause this very sort of injury to Petitioners-Plaintiffs.

# 1. Petitioner Lokey Firearms Is Being Forced to Discontinue Their Business Practices as a Result of the County's Order

The California Supreme Court has recognized that discontinuing a "method of conducting ... business[] as alleged because of fear of arrest and prosecution" under an unlawful measure is sufficient irreparable injury. (*McKay Jewelers, Inc. v. Bowron* (1942) 19 Cal.2d 595, 599.) The County's Order indefinitely prohibits Petitioner Lokey Firearms from operating their firearm business. That alone is sufficient irreparable harm. Yet Petitioner is further irreparably harmed because being shut down indefinitely could lead to their businesses permanently ending. (Lokey Decl., ¶ 11.) Petitioners are thus irreparably harmed by the County's Order and will continue to suffer such harm should that order remain in effect while this case is pending.

# 2. The County's Order Prevents Members of Petitioner CRPA from Purchasing or Taking Delivery of Their Lawfully Purchased Firearms

California law generally requires California residents to purchase firearms through an FFL and to wait 10 days to take possession of a purchased firearm. (Pen. Code, §§ 27540, subd. (a), 27545.) The City's Order prohibiting stores from selling firearms precludes individuals, including members and supporter of CRPA, from acquiring a firearm, depriving them of their Second Amendment right indefinitely. It also precludes those members and supporters who have already bought a firearm before the City's Order took effect from taking possession of their property. (See Lokey Decl., ¶ 8.) Those individuals will thus suffer irreparable harm if enforcement of the City's Order is not stayed pending resolution of this case on the merits.

# B. Preliminary Relief Is Necessary to Preserve the Status Quo

"The general purpose of a preliminary injunction is to preserve the status quo until the merits of the action can be determined." (*Harbor Chevrolet Corp. v. Machinists Local Union 1484* (1959) 173 Cal.App.2d 380, 384.) The balance of harms thus tips in favor of a party seeking injunctive relief to preserve "the last actual peaceable, uncontested status which preceded the

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pending controversy." (People v. Hill (1977) 66 Cal. App. 3d 320, 331.) To that end, the California Supreme Court has recognized that preliminary injunctions preventing enforcement of measures in effect for a short time effectively maintain the status quo. (King v. Meese (1987) 43 Cal.3d 1217, 1227.) The County's Order closing gun stores took effect mere weeks ago. (Lokey Decl., ¶ 6; see also RJN, Ex. G.) Staying its enforcement thus maintains the status quo as is necessary to prevent the various irreparable harms discussed above. (See *supra*, Argument, Part III.A.)

#### C. The Public Interest Will Be Served, Not Harmed, by Preliminary Relief

A third consideration in the balance of harms analysis is "the degree of adverse effect on the public interest or interests of third parties the granting of the injunction will cause." (Cohen, supra, 40 Cal.3d at p. 286, fn. 5.) If the public interest would be harmed by the issuance of a preliminary injunction, courts are understandably reluctant to grant such relief. But when the injunctive relief serves the public interest, the balance naturally tips in the movant's favor.

The public interest is generally served by courts not interfering in the enforcement of measures adopted by duly elected representatives out of respect for the separation of powers. (City of Santa Monica v. Superior Court (Tee Pee Enterps.) (1964) 231 Cal. App. 2d 223, 226.) That, however, is not the case with a measure imposed by a unilateral executive mandate like the County's Order and not when the measure is clearly unlawful, as is the case here. Allowing such a measure to remain in effect invites harm to the public trust. Indeed, localities could pass preempted measures with impunity, enforcing them for extended periods while legal challenges wind through court. It is in the public's best interest to determine the legitimacy of recently adopted measures before enforcement, rather than allow them to take effect and subject citizens to their provisions and penalties, only to have them undone later. This is particularly so here where the potential for government overreach in the name of a health emergency is great.

#### D. If Relief Is Granted, Respondents Will Suffer No Harm Sufficient to Outweigh the Harm to Petitioners Absent Such Relief

Given the substantial likelihood that Petitioners will succeed on the merits, the harm to Respondents in delaying enforcement of the County's Order is slight. Respondents have no interest in enforcing the County's Order, as an "unconstitutional law is void and is as no law." (Ex parte

Siebold (1879) 100 U.S. 371, 376.) Unlike Petitioners, who face criminal and civil penalties for conduct they have a right to engage in by state law and state-issued licenses, Respondents will incur little if any injury from the Court staying enforcement of the County's Order. Petitioners merely ask that Respondents delay enforcement of a likely unlawful policy. No further action or funding is required of o Respondents to cease enforcing the County's Order.

What's more, no government interest is served by enforcing the County's Order before this Court has had a chance to judge the merits of Petitioners' claims. Premature enforcement will serve only to indefinitely deprive law-abiding citizens of their rights and property. Preventing the spread of COVID-19 is undeniably a critical and urgent matter. However, the public is being permitted to engage in other commerce at this time. (See RJN, Ex. G.) Nothing about the process for purchasing firearms makes it particularly risky vis-à-vis COVID-19. Respondents could simply enforce the behavioral guidelines implemented for other businesses operating during this health crisis. In short, the County cannot claim that harm will be increased significantly should its Order be stayed temporarily when it has less intrusive measures to accomplish its legitimate objectives that do not unduly burden Petitioners. The balance of harms thus tilts in Petitioners' favor.

## **CONCLUSION**

For these reasons, Petitioners request that this Court grant their motion to stay enforcement of the County's Order while this case is litigated. Alternatively, Petitioners ask that this Court grant their application for a TRO enjoining Respondents, their employees, agents, and persons acting on their behalf, from enforcing the County's Order and to issue an Order to Show Cause for Respondents to show why a preliminary injunction should not issue.

Dated: April 20, 2020

MICHEL & ASSOCIATES, P.C.

Sean A. Brady

Attorneys for Petitioners/Plaintiff

#### PROOF OF SERVICE

# STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

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I. Laura Palmerin, am employed in the City of Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California. I am over the age eighteen (18) years and am not a party to the within action. My business address is 180 East Ocean Boulevard, Suite 200, Long Beach, California 90802.

On April 20, 2020, I served the foregoing document(s) described as

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT OF EX PARTE APPLICATION TO STAY ENFORCEMENT OF SANTA CLARA ORDER REQUIRING LICENSED FIREARM DEALERS TO CLOSE OR ALTERNATIVELY, FOR TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER AND ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE

on the interested parties in this action by placing

the original

[X] a true and correct copy

thereof by the following means, addressed as follows:

James R. Williams	Jeff Rosen
Office of the County Counsel	District Attorney
County of Santa Clara	Office of the District Attorney
70 West Hedding Street	County of Santa Clara
East Wing, 9th Floor	17275 Butterfield Blvd., Ste A
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- (BY ELECTRONIC MAIL) As follows: I served a true and correct copy by electronic transmission to the emails shown above. Said transmission was reported and completed without error.
- (STATE) I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on April 20, 2020, at Long Beach, California.

Lacurfaleire Laura Palmerin

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