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Tish James Announces Attorney General Platform to Protect New Yorkers from Gun Violence

Will target the NRA, take on gun manufacturers, investigate financial backing of gun violence

NEW YORK -- Candidate for New York Attorney General Tish James today announced her multi-layered platform to fight gun violence in New York State. As Attorney General, Tish James will target the NRA, take on arms manufacturers and dealers, investigate financial backing of gun makers and sellers, and build new models to take on interstate arms trafficking. The full platform, “Taking on the Scourge of Gun Violence and Keeping New Yorkers Safe” can be found [here](#).

“Having strong gun laws in New York is not enough to protect communities from the devastation of gun violence. With the NRA waging a dangerous propaganda campaign, no action from the federal government, and bad actors thwarting legal loopholes, I will use every tool at my disposal as Attorney General to take on the scourge of gun violence ripping our communities apart,” said **Public Advocate Tish James**.

Thirty-three thousand Americans die each year from gun violence. Approximately 5,500 of these deaths are homicides of young men of color. In New York State, there are nearly 3,000 shootings each year. According to a study from the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, the economic cost of gun violence in New York exceeds \$5.6 billion a year, accounting for costs of criminal justice expenses, health care, lost income, and employer expenses.

As Public Advocate, Tish James led the charge to divest New York City’s pensions from gun retailers, stood up to the financial institutions that funded the manufacturers of assault weapons, and took action against gun manufacturers that failed to disclose the risks of their products to their shareholders. Additionally, she successfully advocated for increased funding for the public health model of gun violence prevention.

Highlights from “Taking on the Scourge of Gun Violence and Keeping New Yorkers Safe”

As Attorney General, Tish James will:

- **Use the powers of the office to investigate the legitimacy of the NRA as a charitable institution.**

The NRA is an organ of deadly propaganda masquerading as a charity for public good. Its agenda is set by gun-makers who think arming teachers is a better idea than making it harder for kids to get military grade guns.

- **Hold unscrupulous manufacturers and dealers accountable by investigating arms dealers and enforcing prohibitions against the sale of illegal firearms; target manufacturers that knowingly sell to bad apple dealers; launch an antitrust investigation into the coordinated suppression of life-saving technologies.** There is clear evidence that gun manufacturers not only turn a blind eye to the criminal use of their products, but actively court it by continuing to sell guns to bad apple dealers and flood states with weak gun laws with more product than the legal market could bear on its own.
- **Investigate the financial backing of gun violence by going after fraudulent business practices by gun companies that deceive their shareholders by failing to disclose risks; and investigate deceptive and illegal practices in the sale of securities.** Gun manufacturers may have special protections against legal liability for the catastrophic toll caused by their products, but those protections do not extend to the banks that fund them. Banks have a fiduciary duty to their shareholders to disclose the risks associated with funding the gun trade, both legal and reputational.
- **Create a new coalition model to take on interstate gun trafficking via the Iron Pipeline,** working with coalition partners to create model background checks and anti-straw purchaser laws and build a network of prosecutors and law enforcement agencies dedicated to working together to stop the flow of illegal guns. The bulk of criminal gun trafficking originates from a string of states extending from Florida to Pennsylvania along Interstate 95, commonly known as the “Iron Pipeline.” In New York State, 74 percent of illegal guns originate outside of our state’s borders. Similarly, in New York City, 92 percent of guns seized by the NYPD come from outside of the state.
- **Prevent the spread of guns through unchecked online sales, by investigating websites that sell guns online and pushing a legal and legislative agenda to close legal loopholes.** Federal law does not require background checks to purchase guns online.

Support for “Letitia James For Attorney General: Fighting Gun Violence”

“Now, more than ever, we need leaders who will ensure the safety of New Yorkers. Public Advocate Tish James has a track record of stepping up to the plate, advocating for gun reform, and fighting back against the institutions that back the gun industry. I am confident that as Attorney General, Tish James will continue to fight to protect all New Yorkers from the gun violence that rips our families apart,” said **Assembly Member Inez E. Dickens**.

“We cannot afford to sit idly by and watch more innocent lives fall victim to gun violence. We need an Attorney General who will prioritize gun violence and work tirelessly to protect each and every community in our state. Public Advocate Tish James’ record is clear proof that she will be the Attorney General that will be dedicated to tackling this crisis and keeping all New Yorkers safe,” said **Assembly Member Latrice Walker**.

“We need an Attorney General who will never be afraid to take on the gun industry and the violence that tears our communities apart. Throughout her career, I have witnessed Public Advocate Tish James use every tool at her disposal to tackle the gun industry - from manufacturers, to retailers, and even the financial institutions that support them. As our next Attorney General, I know that Tish will continue to prioritize the safety of all New Yorkers,” said **Assembly Member Tremaine Wright**.

“It is critical that we elect an Attorney General who will prioritize the safety of our communities. During her

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time in office, Public Advocate Tish James has fought to take on the gun industry and the weapons that take too many lives every day. As Attorney General, I know that Tish will be the fighter New Yorkers need to stop this violence and protect our neighborhoods,” said **Assembly Member Kimberly Jean-Pierre**.

"Despite the fact that New York has some of the toughest gun laws in the country, communities of color are still ravaged by gun violence everyday. We need an Attorney General who will not be afraid to tackle this epidemic at its roots and ensure our neighborhoods are safe. Public Advocate Tish James has always led the way in fighting the gun industry and protecting our communities and we need her leaderless as our next Attorney General,” said **Assembly Member Carmen De La Rosa**.

"I am proud to stand by a candidate for Attorney General who has always been a champion for combating gun violence. From divesting from gun retailers to taking on the financial institutions that support gun makers, Tish James' record shows that she is a strong and fearless advocate for gun control. As Attorney General, I know that she will continue her mission to keep all New Yorkers safe,” said **Council Member Laurie Cumbo**.

“Throughout her career, Public Advocate Tish James has been a strong advocate for gun violence prevention. Even in a state with some of the strictest gun laws, our communities are plagued by gun violence each and every day. Public Advocate Tish James has prioritized gun reform policies and regulations to ensure the safety of all New Yorkers. As Attorney General I know that she will continue to fight the illegal influx of guns into our State,” said **Iesha Sekou, CEO and Founder, Street Corner Resources**.

About Public Advocate Tish James

Public Advocate Tish James is currently serving in her second term as the Public Advocate for the City of New York. She is the first woman of color to hold Citywide office in New York City. As Public Advocate, she serves as a watchdog over New York City government agencies, and an advocate and lawyer for the City's most vulnerable and disenfranchised communities. As Public Advocate, Tish has transformed the office to be a real engine of reform and progress. Her office has handled over 32,000 constituent complaints and passed more legislation than all previous Public Advocates combined, including groundbreaking legislation that bans questions about salary history from the employment process to address the pervasive gender wage gap.

Prior to serving as Public Advocate, Tish James served as the New York City Council Member for the 35th District in Brooklyn. As a Council Member, she passed the Safe Housing Act, legislation that forced landlords to improve living conditions for tenants in New York City's worst buildings. She helped uncover the corruption behind the Office of Payroll Administration's CityTime contract, a scheme that cost New York City over \$600 million. She also pushed through a revolutionary recycling package that included expanding plastic recycling, a new clothing and textile recycling program, and increased access to recycling in public spaces.

Before her election to New York City Council, Tish James served as head of the Brooklyn Regional Office of the New York State Attorney General's Office. She resolved hundreds of consumer complaints and investigated predatory lenders who preyed on first-time homebuyers. She assisted the Civil Rights Bureau in its investigation of the NYPD's stop-and-frisk policy and cracked down on firms engaged in deceptive business practices including violations of human rights, environmental laws, and scams targeting immigrants.

Tish began her career as a public defender at the Legal Aid Society. She is a graduate of Howard University School of Law and Lehman College.

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