

## CALIFORNIA DOJ'S RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION DOXES HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF GUN OWNERS

June 28, 2022- A serious breach of privacy and release of sensitive confidential information of likely over a quarter-million firearm owners in California occurred yesterday.<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday, the California Attorney General announced the release of new and updated firearms data available through the California Department of Justice (DOJ)'s 2022 Firearms Dashboard Portal.<sup>2</sup> Through that portal, users were able to easily access the names, CII numbers, and home addresses of thousands of CCW permit holders, including many public officials such as judges, prosecutors, reserve law enforcement officers, correctional officers, and more. CRPA has also been informed that other data that was leaked included, but may not be limited to: (1) Firearm Safety Certificate records containing individuals' names, driver license numbers, and dates of birth; (2) Dealer Record of Sale data; and (3) Assault Weapon Registration data.

While the Portal now has finally been pulled down off the site, it left confidential information exposed for a minimum of twelve hours. The data was likely downloaded hundreds of times and it leaves gun owners concerned about where their information may end up.

This is a privacy breach of stunning proportions. The incompetence that the Attorney General has displayed in allowing such sensitive data to be accessed is shocking. The Attorney General has put thousands of people in danger by essentially handing criminals a "shopping list" of specific homes to burglarize to steal firearms, a list of judges home addresses, addresses of stalking victims for their stalkers to find, locations of battered women and rape survivors, and home addresses for police officers. Careers of individuals excising their right to self-protection may now be in jeopardy given this public disclosure as well.

CRPA demands that DOJ must not restore the Firearms Dashboard Portal until it is certain that no private information can be accessed through it and that DOJ must notify every person who may have had their private information compromised as required by California Civil Code § 1798.29(a). This is exactly the type of incident that CRPA and other gun rights groups warned of when the ability to access gun owner data was approved in the state legislature—and now we see the implications of mis-handled data full force.

At least one reporter was able to independently confirm that 244 judge permits were listed in the database along with the judges' home addresses and dates of birth.<sup>3</sup> This is a massive violation of California law. "No state or local agency shall post the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official on the Internet without first obtaining the written permission of that individual." (Gov. Code, § 6254.21(a).)

There are also other aspects of this horrifying leak that likely violate the law. For example, release of the Driver's License information may violate Vehicle Code section 1808.21 (the

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<sup>1</sup> CRPA is still trying to determine the exact scope of the leak.

<sup>2</sup> <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-releases-new-firearms-data-increase-transparency-and>

<sup>3</sup> <https://thereload.com/new-california-ag-website-leaks-massive-trove-of-gun-owner-private-information/>

Rebecca Schaeffer law), and the release of CII numbers violates Government Code sections 6254, 6276, and 6276.12 and Penal Code sections 11076 and 13202.

Given the breadth of this leak, the CRPA legal team is still investigating what other laws may have been violated.

CRPA is questioning whether this was not simply incompetence, but instead an intentional, malicious act by someone at DOJ to intimidate gun owners as retaliation for the *Bruen* ruling. What better way to stop law abiding citizens from trying to get their CCW than by a show of power to dox them all if they dare apply? It is no longer a far-fetched idea when our governor is already threatening retaliation against millions of gun owners by signing every bad gun bill that comes to his desk simply because the Supreme Court restored the rights that had been taken by politicians like Newsom.

CRPA and our attorneys are exploring all options, up to and including litigation, to protect the privacy of California gun owners who are now in danger thanks to the DOJ. All citizens of California should be concerned about this type of reckless care of the data the state holds on its citizens. This could happen to anyone and a government that is either reckless or intentional in doxing its citizens should have everyone asking if their own information is safe?

CRPA demands that an independent investigation commence immediately. Further, the Department of Justice must act promptly to be completely transparent about what occurred, take all steps necessary to limit the damage. Finally, the Attorney General should take responsibility and should resign for causing one of the worst data leaks ever seen in this state.