



Date: September 6, 2005
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Councilmember Bonnie Lowenthal *BL*
Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell *PO*
Subject: AB 352 Ammunition Serialization Technology

Background:

Assembly Bill 352 was introduced by California Assembly Member Paul Koretz earlier this year in an effort to require that all new semiautomatic handguns sold in California after January 1, 2009, be required to have their serial number microstamped on the firing pin. When the gun is fired, the firing pin impresses the number on the shell casing before it is ejected from the weapon. Police at the crime scene could immediately read the serial number with a handheld magnifying glass, query the existing California Department of Justice database, and identify the purchaser of the handgun.

AB 352 has the potential to help law enforcement save valuable time and money by narrowing down the leads they investigate after examining the casings recovered. Moreover, this legislation has the potential to substantially enhance ballistic identification and enable law enforcement to immediately link the shell casing to the purchaser of the handgun, thus substantially aiding investigations.

Methods of ballistic identification have assisted law enforcement agencies such as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms (ATF), Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), and local law enforcement agencies, including our own Long Beach Police Department.

Recommendation:

I, therefore request that the Council join me in asking the City Attorney to draft a resolution in support of California Assembly Bill 352 that will require new ballistic microstamping technology for handguns.