

NY Firearms Maker Blames Move On New Law

Jim Fitzgerald, Associated Press

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (AP) — A firearms manufacturer in New York, partially blaming the state's new gun control law, said Wednesday it's moving its corporate offices — and its plans for expansion — to Pennsylvania.

Kahr Firearms Group of Pearl River is the first gunmaker to announce it's leaving because of the Secure Ammunition and Firearms Enforcement Act, which was put into law after closed-door negotiations in January. It was the first law in the nation prompted by the killing of 20 first-graders and six educators in Newtown, Conn., in December.

"We're looking for a more friendly environment for our business," said Frank Harris, Kahr's vice president for sales and marketing. "Maybe we could have stayed here and built a plant, but the way the bill was passed left us feeling there were a lot of uncertainties going forward."

"Why take a chance when we can be in a state where they're not looking to cause us any problems?" Harris added.

Calls to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's office were not immediately returned.

Kahr is owned by Kook-Jin Justin Moon, a son of Unification Church founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

Harris said Pennsylvania's enthusiasm also fueled the decision to leave New York.

He said Kahr has purchased 620 acres in Pike County, Pa., and will move its 10-person corporate staff next year after building offices.

Kahr also expects to build a new factory there — with 80 to 100 jobs — within five years. It currently has plants in Worcester, Mass., and Pillager, Minn., Harris said.

Kahr had been close to finalizing a deal for land in Orange County, N.Y., with room for expansion, until the gun control law was enacted, he said.

New York's law expands a ban on military-style weapons, requires mental health professionals to report threats, limits magazines to seven bullets, taxes bullets and creates a registry. It's been widely attacked by gun rights advocates.

"We're all for stopping criminals, but this act is not going to do that," Harris said. "This will only hurt the responsible law-abiding citizens."

Referring to his company's moving plans, he said, "The Safe Act has unintended consequences and this is one of them."

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