



March 12, 2010

The Honorable David R. Obey  
Chairman  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-218, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan  
Chairman  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
H-310, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Wolf  
Ranking Member  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Funding in the FY 2011 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Bill to Support Federal Efforts to Curb Illegal Guns**

Dear Chairmen Obey and Mollohan and Ranking Members Lewis and Wolf:

As mayors, our highest priority is to protect public safety. But we can't do this alone. We need help from our state and federal partners. Last year, our coalition sent a *Blueprint for Federal Action Against Illegal Guns* to the Obama Administration. The *Blueprint* offers 40 recommendations for improving federal enforcement of existing gun laws. We urge Congress to provide the necessary funding for these critical reforms, as well as for full funding of the 2007 NICS Improvement Amendments Act (Public Law 110-180).

The *Blueprint's* 40 recommendations were a product of extensive dialogue, research, and overwhelming consensus, all in support of a basic goal: better enforcement of existing gun laws. Achieving it, however, will require Congress to provide the funding necessary to support the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives' (ATF) and its efforts to fight illegal gun trafficking. We urge Congress to provide additional funding for the following ATF programs:

- Project Gunrunner: An additional \$39.5 million is needed to expand Project Gunrunner and increase the number of ATF personnel assigned to interdict gun trafficking from the United States to Mexico;
- Interstate Firearms Trafficking Unit (IFTU): An additional \$3 million is needed for the establishment of an Interstate Firearms Trafficking Unit to coordinate interstate investigations;

- Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) Audits: An additional \$53 million for ATF to hire more inspectors to meet its targets of triennial audits of FFL's;
- ATF Task Forces: Necessary resources to support 250 additional state and local law enforcement officers to be assigned to ATF Task Forces;
- Office of Tactical Trace Analysis: An additional \$14 million to ATF to create an Office of Tactical Trace Analysis at the National Tracing Center. The office would proactively analyze trace data and to identify gun traffickers and problematic dealers.

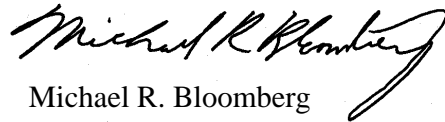
We also urge Congress to provide full funding (\$375 million) for the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (Public Law No. 110-180). In the wake of the tragic events at Virginia Tech in 2007, Congress wisely acted to strengthen the integrity of our federal background check system. Unfortunately, however, many states today do not have the resources to effectively update and maintain criminal history and mental health records in NICS, allowing a number of prohibited gun purchasers to slip through the cracks.

On behalf of the nearly 500 mayors who are members of the bi-partisan coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, we urge the Congress to fully fund the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 and to provide the ATF with the resources it needs to accomplish its mission of combating the flow of illegal guns into our cities and communities.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor of Boston



Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor of New York City

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable John Boehner, Republican Leader, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Carolyn McCarthy, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable John Dingell, U.S. House of Representatives