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ATF, FIREARMS INDUSTRY JOIN FORCES TO STOP ILLEGAL FIREARMS PURCHASES IN HOUSTON

“Buy a gun for someone who can't, and buy yourself 10 years in jail.”

HOUSTON — The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and representatives from the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) — the trade association for the firearms industry — today announced the return of the “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy” major campaign to reduce illegal straw purchases of firearms in the Houston area.

Don't Lie for the Other Guy was developed to raise public awareness of the seriousness of the crime of purchasing a firearm for someone who cannot legally do so, or does not want their name associated with the transaction. The program also educates firearms dealers so they too can better detect and deter potential straw purchases.

The campaign, which has been enhanced to focus on the purchasers, drives home the message that anyone attempting an illegal firearm purchase faces a stiff federal penalty: **Buy a gun for someone who can't, and buy yourself 10 years in jail.**

“The straw purchase of firearms is the first step in illegal firearms trafficking and the first step to landing in a prison cell,” said Acting Deputy Director William Hoover of ATF. “If you illegally purchase a firearm as part of a straw-purchase scheme, you are just as responsible as the person who uses that firearm in a crime. ATF will strictly enforce the federal firearms laws to stop and prevent guns from getting into the hands of criminals.”

“Firearms trafficking, especially along the Southwest Border, continues to be a top priority of the Department of Justice and this United States Attorney’s Office,” said U.S.

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Attorney Jose Angel Moreno, Southern District of Texas. “We have increased our focus and resources to combat straw purchases of firearms, which invariably end up in the hands of felons and other ineligible persons and the brutal drug trafficking organizations operating in Mexico. We depend on our partnerships with ATF and conscientious and prudent firearms dealers to attack the illegal flow of guns into Mexico. In this district, buying firearms, ammunition or other controlled tactical equipment for someone else who can’t, will buy you time behind bars.”

The Don’t Lie campaign will significantly bolster ATF’s Project Gunrunner, the international strategy to disrupt the illegal flow of firearms associated with criminal groups and drug trafficking organizations operating in Mexico and along the U.S. southwest border. The initiative addresses the violent crime occurring on the border between the United States and Mexico.

NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel Lawrence G. Keane said, “Understanding the importance of cooperating with law enforcement, the firearms industry through the NSSF has for nearly a decade partnered with ATF and the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs to assist law enforcement in educating firearms retailers to be better able to identify and deter illegal straw purchases of firearms and raise public awareness that straw purchasing is a serious crime. The Don’t Lie for the Other Guy program has been welcomed by firearms retailers as a valuable educational tool to better enable them to spot would-be straw purchasers and prevent illegal straw purchases. This ATF/DOJ-OJP/NSSF partnership is a great example of coordination and tangible success on the federal, state and local level and with federally licensed firearms retailers throughout the country.”

The Don't Lie program is a vital component of ATF’s outreach efforts to educate firearms dealers and their employees. This program is seen as an important tool used by ATF in accomplishing its mission of reducing firearms violence nationwide when focusing its efforts on armed violent offenders, career criminals, gangs and gun traffickers. The campaign is reaching out to firearms retailers in the Houston area and distributing Don't Lie retailer education kits. Each kit contains a training video and brochure for the storeowner and staff, as well as point-of-purchase displays aimed at deterring this illegal activity.

Houston residents and visitors will see Don’t Lie for the Other Guy billboards and posters throughout the city and hear the campaign’s strong message via radio and television Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Outdoor signs will be displayed anywhere from four weeks to several months, with PSAs played for one month.

Don't Lie for the Other Guy is a joint ATF and the NSSF program. Funding for the program comes from a grant issued by the U.S. Department of Justice. The revisit to the Houston area is funded by NSSF.

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