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ATF, U.S. ATTORNEY, AND FIREARMS INDUSTRY JOIN FORCES TO STOP THE ILLEGAL PURCHASES OF FIREARMS IN EL PASO AND LAS CRUCES

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

EL PASO, Texas, — 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 “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy” campaign to reduce the illegal straw purchase of firearms in the El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, N.M., regions.

Don't Lie for the Other Guy was developed to raise public awareness to the seriousness of the crime to purchase 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 can better detect and deter potential straw purchases.

The campaign, which has been enhanced to better 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.**

“If you purchase a firearm for someone who cannot legally do so, that stroke of a pen could cost you up to 10 years in federal prison with no parole,” stated U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas John E. Murphy. “Ask yourself, ‘Is it worth it?’”

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“Bringing the ‘Don’t Lie’ campaign to two more cities significantly bolsters ATF’s continued work to prevent and address firearms violence across our nation. Introducing the initiative to Southwest border cities further enhances Project Gunrunner, ATF’s international strategy to disrupt the illegal flow of firearms across the U.S.–Mexico border and curb the associated violence perpetrated on both sides of the border by Mexican drug traffickers. We can no longer afford to address firearms violence with enforcement alone, which is why we place great value in our continuing partnership with the firearms industry. If ever there was a place where such an effort was needed, this is it,” said Robert Champion, special agent in charge, ATF Dallas Field Division.

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 the ATF and the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP) to assist law enforcement in educating firearms retailers to be better able to identify and deter illegal straw purchases of firearms and to 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 levels and with federally licensed firearms retailers throughout the country.”

The Don't Lie for the Other Guy program is a vital component of ATF’s outreach efforts to educate firearms dealers and their employees. This program is an important tool for ATF to accomplish its mission of reducing firearms violence in our neighborhoods by focusing its efforts on armed violent offenders, career criminals, gangs and gun traffickers. The campaign is reaching out to firearms retailers in the greater El Paso and Las Cruces 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 to deter this illegal activity.

El Paso and Las Cruces 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 (PSA). Outdoor signs will be displayed anywhere from four weeks to several months, with PSAs played for two months.

Don't Lie for the Other Guy is a joint program of ATF and the NSSF. Funding for the program comes from a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice.

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