



A national campaign to prevent
the illegal purchases of firearms



The National Shooting Sports Foundation is the trade association for the firearms industry.

For Immediate Release

February 5, 2009

www.atf.gov

www.dontlie.org

PIO Vera Fedorak, ATF

Office: (313) 202-3407

Cell (313) 647-1885

Ted Novin, NSSF

Office: (203) 426-1320

Cell: (202) 253-1860

ATF, U. S. Attorney's Office-ED & the Firearms Industry Join Forces to Stop Illegal Purchases of Firearms in Michigan

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

Detroit, Feb. 5 -- The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan and representatives from the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) - the trade association for the firearms industry - today jointly announced a major campaign to reduce significantly the illegal straw purchases of firearms in Michigan.

The program, called "Don't Lie for the Other Guy," was developed to raise public awareness that it is a serious crime to purchase a firearm for someone who cannot legally do so or for someone who does not otherwise want his or her name associated with the purchase. The program is also designed to educate firearms dealers on how to 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.

Special Agent in Charge Thomas E. Brandon of the ATF Detroit Field Division stated, "Keeping legal firearms out of the hands of criminals and other prohibited persons is a tough job that requires partnership. ATF is proud to partner with the firearms industry and the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) to tackle this problem. The NSSF and the ATF delivered the 'Don't Lie for the Other Guy' training program to over 200 Michigan Federal Firearms Licensees (FFL's) this week, informing them of 'straw purchase' schemes and what they can do to prevent illegal purchases from taking place." Brandon added, "ATF stands committed with the firearms industry in proactively identifying and preventing 'straw purchases,' and informing the general public and potential would-be 'straw' buyers of the consequences to public safety and the criminal penalties associated."

NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel Lawrence G. Keane said, "This program has been welcomed by firearms dealers as a valuable educational tool to better enable them to spot would-be straw purchasers and prevent illegal straw purchases. Our goal in reaching out to the public is to warn them that they would be committing a serious crime by attempting to purchase a firearm for someone who cannot legally possess one. We applaud and appreciate the support of the ATF and the United States Attorney for joining with members of our industry in this cooperative effort."

Residents and visitors of Detroit, Pontiac, Flint and Saginaw will see Don't Lie for the Other Guy billboards, posters and bus signs, and will hear the campaign's strong message via radio and television public service announcements (PSA). Outdoor media signs will be displayed anywhere from four weeks to several months, and the PSA will be played for the next month.

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 on how to better recognize and deter the illegal purchase of firearms through straw purchases. This program is an important tool for ATF to accomplish its mission of reducing violent crime and protecting the public. The campaign is reaching out to firearms retailers in Michigan and distributing Don't Lie retailer 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.

Acting United States Attorney Terrence Berg said, "Buying a gun for someone who can't legally get one is a very dangerous game in which the community is the loser and the buyer goes directly to jail. Federal law aims to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous persons. Those who try get around that law by "lying and buying" for a prohibited person are putting people in danger. Our office will make sure they are prosecuted and face stiff penalties."

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

###