NEW YORKERS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

Working to Reduce Gun-Related Violence Since 1993

For Immediate Release

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NYAGV HAILS NEW YORK CITY'S LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THOSE WHO SUPPLY ILLEGAL GUNS TO OUR STREETS

New York, New York, New Yorkers Against Gun Violence (NYAGV), New York's leading state-wide grassroots gun violence prevention organization applauds New York City's new round of lawsuits against gun dealers who through corrupt or sloppy business practices flood the streets of New York with illegal guns.

Jackie Kuhls, Executive Director, New Yorkers Against Gun Violence said, "Mayor Bloomberg continues to lead the charge against those who illegally traffic in deadly weapons. Last May his legal team filed lawsuits against 15 gun dealers who supplied New York's streets with crime guns, several have already settled and agreed to oversight. Today, 12 more gun dealers are the subject of legal action, making it clear that our city will not tolerate those who funnel guns to prohibited hands."

A highly efficient and continuous business practice and system exists, that moves guns from legal manufacture and sale to prohibited buyers, making them illegal guns. These illegal guns end up in the hands of criminals, youth and violent people who use them to threaten, maim and kill. The City of New York is disproportionately affected by rogue gun dealers who play a key role in this system since the vast majority of crime guns used in the City come from other states with lax gun laws. Clearly it is possible to operate a gun store responsibly, just 1% of gun dealers are responsible for almost 60% of crime guns. Yet these rogue dealers operate with near impunity due to protections afforded them by a series of measures passed in Congress including limitations on the number of law enforcement visits allowed and by absurdly low funding of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. A 2004 study by Americans for Gun Safety found that of the 120 worst gun dealers in the country, those with an average of 500 crime guns traced to them, 96 of the dealers were still in operation.

Manufacturers could stop supplying these dirty dealers, and they do not. Congress has acted only to protect the dirty dealers and gun traffickers. It is clearly up to state and local government to ensure the safety of our residents.

Kuhls closed, "While we are thankful that crime is down and that New York City is one of America's safest cities, we still have neighborhoods that are plagued by gun violence. There are still children who go to sleep to the sound of gunfire. All of our residents deserve to live without fear. Illegal guns take hundreds of lives in our city each year and maim many others. We know who is supplying these guns to our streets, and the Bloomberg administration is making sure that rogue gun dealers will be held accountable."

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