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GUN TRAFFICKERS SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON

Straw Purchase Scheme Dismantled Which Took Georgia Guns to Boston

Atlanta, GA - CHIEN DINH NGUYEN, 34, of Lawrenceville, Georgia, and NGUYEN VAN NGUYEN, 34, of Randolph, Massachusetts, were sentenced to federal prison today by United States District Judge Thomas W. Thrash.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "This is another case where a gun bought by a straw purchaser in Georgia was later involved in a violent crime somewhere else. One of the guns involved in this case was recovered in Boston during the investigation of a suspected gang-related shooting. We will continue to work with all of our law enforcement partners to cut off these illegal transactions that too often are connected to potentially deadly crimes."

"Straw purchasing is a serious offense," said Scott Sweetow, Acting Special Agent in Charge of ATF's Atlanta Field Division. "People who traffic guns, like the Nguyens, feed an iron pipeline that often ends with bloody results, and such was the case in Boston. It is only through strong cooperation, among multiple jurisdictions, that we can choke off the flow of illegal arms. We applaud the efforts of the Boston Police Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office."

I would like to commend the outstanding efforts and superb collaboration between the United States Attorney's Office, ATF and the Boston Police Department," said Boston Police Commissioner Edward Davis. "This latest successful prosecution demonstrates our ceaseless efforts to attack gun violence at its very source. Let this be a clear message to anyone engaged in illegal gun activity that the city of Boston and our far-reaching law enforcement partners will not stand for it."

NGUYEN VAN NGUYEN was sentenced to 15 years, 8 months in prison, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release. CHIEN DINH NGUYEN was sentenced to 2 years, 6 months in prison, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release. CHIEN DINH NGUYEN and NGUYEN VAN NGUYEN were convicted of gun-related charges after a

jury trial on December 31, 2007. VAN NGUYEN has a prior record that makes him an Armed Career Criminal under federal law, with a mandatory minimum 15-year sentence.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias, the charges and evidence presented at trial: On May 30, 2006, ATF agents interviewed a cooperating suspect (“CS”) who admitted “straw purchasing” firearms for the NGUYENs starting in April of 2006. The firearms purchased by the CS, were purchased from an Atlanta area pawn shop. The CS said he had met with CHIEN NGUYEN and VAN NGUYEN at “The Islander,” a bar then owned by CHIEN NGUYEN. The CS agreed to buy firearms for the NGUYENs, and he did so on three occasions. Both NGUYENs drove the CS to the pawn shop at different times to make the purchases. The “CS” used money provided by the NGUYENs to make the purchases, and then gave all the firearms to the NGUYENs. At trial, the evidence showed that VAN NGUYEN was transporting the firearms to Boston to unlawfully distribute to others. Early in 2006, CHIEN NGUYEN and his wife also purchased firearms, two of which were later recovered by law enforcement in Boston.

According to the evidence, the NGUYENs were responsible for the unlawful straw purchase of 23 guns.

Further investigation by Boston police indicated that in May 2006, a public shootout occurred in the North Dorchester neighborhood of Boston. All of the suspects fled on foot, leaving behind a leased, sport utility vehicle with multiple bullet holes. During a search of the abandoned vehicle, Boston Police Department (BPD) detectives discovered two hidden compartments and recovered two handguns--one of which had been purchased two months earlier in the NGUYEN's trafficking scheme. Although the Boston shooting investigation remains open, ATF and BPD investigators traveled to Atlanta to testify at trial. Boston police continue to seek the public's help in the shooting investigation. At today's sentencing hearing, the government told the court since the conclusion of the trial, a third gun has been recovered in Quincy, Massachusetts, after a burglary.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Assistant United States Attorneys Francey Hakes and Todd Alley prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.