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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS  
ANNOUNCE PLAN TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE**

**Gun Violations Arising from Domestic Violence Crimes Targeted**

Anchorage, Alaska – Federal, state and local law enforcement officials joined Monday to announce plans to reduce gun violence and domestic violence homicides in Alaska. U.S. Attorney Timothy M. Burgess announced that during the past nine months, 30 defendants have been indicted for federal firearm charges as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods, a state-wide partnership of law enforcement.

In an effort to reduce the number of homicides arising from domestic violence, Burgess also announced plans to focus on gun violations by individuals who have previously been convicted of crimes of domestic violence.

"Alaska leads the nation in the number of homicides resulting from domestic violence cases. We are sending a message today that this is unacceptable in our community. Federal law prohibits individuals convicted of most domestic violence violations from possessing a gun. If we find those individuals in possession of a weapon, they will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law," he said.

Col. Julia Grimes, Director of the Alaska State Troopers, said, "As reported recently, violent crime in Alaska is on the rise and above the national average. We are going to continue to work closely with each other to bring these criminals to justice."

"Gun crime doesn't recognize neighborhood borders and that's why a community strategy for this issue is so important," said Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich. "Never before in our city's history has our police department worked so closely with prosecutors in the Department of Justice to make sure those individuals who use a gun to commit a crime serve time."

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Brad Earman, Resident Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, said, "The average sentence received for Alaska defendants convicted of federal gun violations is seven years. We are determined that anyone convicted will do hard time for gun crime."

Burgess noted that the number of federal indictments for gun crimes increased 57% in 2003. "But we have a lot more work to do and with the strong partnerships developed across the state, we will get the job done."

Alaska Deputy Attorney General Susan Parkes announced that her office has recently hired two prosecutors to handle gun violence prosecutions at the state and federal level, with federal grants provided by Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). David Nesbett and Elizabeth Baker, Assistant District Attorneys, are prosecuting cases arising from gun violations in state and federal courts. "By focusing on serious gun cases, these prosecutors can work closely with federal, state and local authorities to stop the violence," she said.

Anchorage School Superintendent Carol Comeau explained how the COPS in Schools program was working closely with Project Safe Neighborhoods, in an effort to ensure that Anchorage schools remain safe. She also said, "Our goal is to make students understand that if they misuse a gun, they are changing their life forever."

U.S. Attorney Burgess, Col. Grimes, Mayor Begich, Superintendent Comeau and ATF Resident Agent in Charge Earman were joined at the conference by Assistant U.S. Attorney and PSN Coordinator Kevin Feldis; Chief Walter Monegan, Anchorage Police Department; U.S. Marshal Randy Johnson; Tom McClenaghan, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Harvey Goehring, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration; Bob Linton, Anchorage District Attorney; Bruce Roberts, Deputy Municipal Attorney; Mark Mew, Director of Security & Emergency Preparedness, Anchorage School District; Josh Wyne, Chief, U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services; Billy Houser, Anchorage Area Manager, Alaska Probation and Parole ; Rob Wood, Unit Supervisor, McLaughlin Youth Center; David Nesbett, Assistant District Attorney and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, Elizabeth Baker, Assistant District Attorney; and Judy Sullivan, Executive Director, AWAIC.

Mr. Burgess and Col. Grimes highlighted several recent federal gun violence cases:

- U.S. v. Terrell Phillips. On October 17, 2003, Phillips entered the Lace 'Em Up clothing store in the Northway Mall in Anchorage. Once he was inside the store, Phillips got into an argument with another man. Phillips pulled out his handgun and fired two shots at the man before fleeing. Last week, he pleaded guilty to being a Felon in Possession of a Firearm and Possessing a Machine Gun. He faces 57-71 months in prison.

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- U.S. v. Adams. On June 15, 2004, Adams allegedly stole a Winchester rifle from a boat docked near the village of Nunam Iqua, near St. Mary's in Western Alaska. He allegedly fired the rifle at two village residents and at an Alaska State Trooper. According to the indictment returned in September, Adams had prior convictions for robbery, assault and domestic violence, and as a result, was prohibited by law from possessing a gun.
- U.S. v. Armstead. Armstead had three prior felony convictions in New York state and several pending felony charges from the state of Rhode Island at the time he purchased a Hi-Point pistol using a false name in Alaska. When he used his real name during a later purchase, the NCIS check stopped the sale. Armstead and his associates purchased five pistols illegally, and to date only one has been recovered. He was convicted of being a Felon in Possession and Lying to a Firearms Dealer to illegally obtain a firearm. Following conviction at trial, he was sentenced to 84 months in prison.
- U.S. v. Deshay Jordan. On December 10, 2003, Jordan fired a Ruger 9mm handgun in a parking lot in the area of 26<sup>th</sup> and Minnesota Boulevard, shooting a man. Two days later he used the same 9mm handgun to threaten physical harm to the mother of three of his children inside her residence on 36<sup>th</sup> Street. When police arrived, he refused to exit the home, and fired shots at the police. He then ran out of the back of the house and broke into a neighbor's house before being safely apprehended by the Anchorage Police Department. He was convicted of Possessing Firearms after having been Convicted of a Crime of Domestic Violence in Alaska State Court and being a Felon in Possession of a Firearm. He was sentenced to 115 months in August 2004.

Burgess said, "These cases demonstrate how gun violence can impact the entire community. We are determined to stop the violence."

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