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ATF, LOCAL POLICE AND FIREARMS INDUSTRY JOIN FORCES TO STOP ILLEGAL FIREARMS PURCHASES IN GULFPORT

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

GULFPORT, Miss. — The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Gulfport Police Department and the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the trade association for the firearms industry, today announced a major campaign to significantly reduce the illegal straw purchases of firearms in Gulfport.

The program, “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 transaction. 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.**

“Firearms violence continues to erode the quality of life in many American communities. ATF investigates and prevents the illegal use and trafficking of firearms as part of its core mission,” said ATF Deputy Director Kenneth Melson. “ATF actively partners with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to stem firearms-related violent crime. We applaud the Gulfport Police Department for bringing the ‘Don’t Lie for the Other Guy’ message to the community and addressing the issue of straw purchasing.”

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Residents and visitors to Gulfport will see Don't Lie for the Other Guy billboards and posters throughout the city. They will hear the campaign's strong message via radio and television public service announcements (PSAs). Outdoor media signs will be displayed anywhere from four weeks to several months, and the PSAs will be played for one month.

"The Gulfport Police Department is committed to partnering with the ATF and NSSF to combat the illegal purchase of firearms by individuals for others who are prohibited from purchasing or possessing firearms," said Alan Weatherford, Chief of Police for the Gulfport Police Department. "We are excited to bring such a program to Gulfport and look forward to a cooperative effort with our local federally licensed firearms dealers."

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 more than a decade partnered with 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 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.

Don't Lie for the Other Guy is a joint program of ATF and NSSF. The Gulfport launch of "Don't Lie" is being funded exclusively by the Gulfport Police Department. If you have information about someone participating in straw purchases, contact the Gulfport Police Department at (228)831-4416.

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