



STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE

Mayor

250 City Hall

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

January 31, 2013

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress
2235 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Scott Rigell
Member of Congress
418 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress
2308 Rayburn House Office building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress
204 Cannon House Office building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Cummings, Rigell, Maloney, and Meehan:

I am writing to you today to express my strong support for the “Gun Trafficking Prevention Act of 2013.” This Bill prohibits the trafficking or dealings of guns where there is reason to believe that its use would result in a felony. Additionally, it tackles the issue of “straw purchases” by prohibiting materially false statements regarding the actual buyer to federal firearms licensees. The Bill’s other provisions and enhanced penalties go a long way to address these serious problems and the deficiencies of the current law.

I am proud of the accomplishments that my Administration and the brave men and women of the Baltimore Police Department have made to reduce guns crime. In 2012, total gun crime declined by 6% over the historic lows realized from the previous year. Additionally, there were 217 victims of homicide in Baltimore City last year. While these numbers are a far cry from the high totals of homicides and shootings the City experienced a decade ago, the number and the countless shattered lives that it represents is far too high.

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As we delve deeper into those statistics, out of all of last year's total homicides over 83% were killed by handguns and the vast majority of those guns were obtained illegally. It needs be noted that Baltimore City has only one licensed gun store that operates in its borders. Consequently, we know that these guns are being illegally trafficked across state lines and into the City, for their ultimate purpose of killing and maiming our citizens.

It is for these reasons that I support this legislation, which I believe is desperately needed and long overdue. I commend you and the other sponsors of this Bill for addressing this important issue that law enforcement agencies at the local, state and federal levels all agree will be a necessary tool to stop the influx of illegal guns that flood into Baltimore and cities all across the Country. If my Administration can be of any assistance to ensure this Bill's passage, please let me know. Thank you for all of your efforts and your continued commitment to making our streets safer.

Sincerely,


Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor
City of Baltimore

cc: *Anthony Batts, Chief, Baltimore Police Department*
James H. Green, Deputy Counsel, Baltimore Police Department
Alex Sanchez, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Robert Maloney, Deputy Chief for Public Safety, Office of the Mayor
Ryan O'Doherty, Director of Communications and Police, Office of the Mayor
Andrew Smullian, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Kevin Kelly, Van Scoyoc Associates