

Washington, DC (Feb. 5, 2013)—Today, Reps. Patrick Meehan (R-Pennsylvania), Carolyn Maloney (D-New York), Scott Rigell (R-Virginia), and Elijah Cummings (D-Maryland) were joined by law enforcement officials from across the country in unveiling the first bipartisan bill in the House of Representatives during this Congress to make firearms trafficking a federal crime and impose stronger penalties for “straw purchasers” who buy guns for convicted felons and others who are prohibited from buying guns on their own.

H.R. 452, The Gun Trafficking Prevention Act of 2013, directly addresses concerns by law enforcement officials who testified before Congress that a dedicated firearms trafficking statute would help them combat the flow of thousands of firearms to violent criminals, international drug cartels, and a host of other dangerous people.

“As a former federal prosecutor, I’ve seen firsthand the challenges faced by law enforcement personnel fighting to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. This legislation will give law enforcement critical tools they need to combat gun violence while protecting the constitutional rights of law-abiding Americans to keep and bear arms,” said Rep. Meehan. “I’m proud that members of both parties were able to reach across the aisle and find common ground on this important issue.”

“For too long, we have been handcuffing the wrong people. We have made it too hard for law enforcement to stop guns from getting into the hands of criminals and too easy for criminals to get their hands on guns. With this bill we can begin to turn that around and slap the handcuffs where they belong,” Maloney said. “Americans have been very clear: they want something done about the scourge of gun violence-- and they want bi-partisan cooperation in Washington. At this moment, this bill is a step toward achieving both.”

“The Gun Trafficking Prevention Act of 2013 is directed at keeping guns out of the hands of criminals,” said Rigell. “The murders of our first responders in New York on Christmas Eve with a straw purchased firearm was a tragedy, and we must find common ground to lessen the level of gun violence in the United States. This common sense legislation has bipartisan support, and when we find common ground, we must embrace it, celebrate it, and act on it.”

“After the massacre at Sandy Hook, some said nothing would ever happen in the House of

Representatives,” said Cummings. “We are here today—on a bipartisan basis—to say that those skeptics are wrong. We have a message for our colleagues in the House. This bill makes sense. Law enforcement officials have asked for it. It will make a significant difference in combating gun crime. And it will not affect the rights of a single legitimate gun owner.”

Specifically, the legislation:

- **Prohibits Firearms Trafficking:** □ The bill prohibits the purchase or transfer of a firearm if the intent is to deliver it to someone else who is prohibited by Federal or State law from possessing one.
- **Strengthens Penalties for Straw Purchasers:** □ The bill strengthens penalties to up to 20 years imprisonment for “straw purchasers” who intentionally provide false or misleading material information when they purchase firearms from Federal Firearms Licensees.
- **Enhances Penalties for Kingpins and Multiple Illegal Purchases:** □ The bill provides enhanced penalties for organizers or managers of firearms trafficking networks and recommends that the Sentencing Commission increase penalties for multiple illegal gun purchases.

Attendees at today’s press conference in support of the legislation were representatives of law enforcement organizations from across the country, including the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Police Foundation, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, the Washington, DC Metropolitan Police Department, the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association, the Baltimore Police Department, Prince George’s County Sheriff’s Office, and the Petersburg Bureau of Police. Also in attendance were representatives from the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the American Bar Association, CeaseFirePA, the Violence Policy Center, and the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence.

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