

## **THE STOP ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS ACT OF 2016**

Criminals, who could not pass Federal background checks themselves, have long turned to straw purchasers and gun traffickers to acquire firearms. Yet, under current law there is no criminal statute specifically prohibiting straw purchasing or trafficking in firearms. Instead, prosecutors rely primarily on laws that prohibit making false statements in connection with the purchase of a firearm. For years, law enforcement officials have expressed concern that these “paperwork” violations are ineffective tools to prevent straw purchasing and firearms trafficking.

- Federal law enforcement officials estimate that tens of thousands of firearms are illegally trafficked within the United States each year.
- Law enforcement has long been concerned about the flow of firearms into Mexico. According to a 2016 GAO report, more than 70 percent of all crime guns recovered and traced in Mexico between 2009 and 2014, representing more than 73,000 firearms, were traced back to the United States.

The bipartisan Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act of 2016 would provide law enforcement the tools they need to keep guns out of the hands of criminals.

### **Key Provisions of the Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act**

- The bill would establish new specific, tough Federal criminal offenses to prohibit and punish the straw purchasing of firearms and the trafficking of firearms.
- The bill would criminalize smuggling firearms out of the United States to complement existing laws criminalizing the smuggling of firearms into the United States.
- The bill strengthens existing law regarding the transfer of guns to prohibited persons, and ensures that the law prohibits the sale of guns and ammunition to people who intend to turn around and transfer them to criminals. The bill provides law enforcement with important tools to help them investigate and prosecute those who purchase and traffic guns illegally.
- The bill does not affect lawful purchases from Federal firearms licensees, nor does it target the innocent transfer of a firearm as a gift, or in relation to a legitimate raffle, auction or contest.

### **Law Enforcement Support**

The Fraternal Order of Police, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the National Tactical Officers Association, the National District Attorneys Association, and the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys all support the Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act of 2016.