



Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police

MEDIA RELEASE

LAW ENFORCEMENT MARKS 20th ANNIVERSARY OF BRADY LAW SIGNING

STRESS NEED FOR EXPANDING BACKGROUND CHECKS NATIONWIDE

Chicago, IL – Marking the 20th Anniversary of the Brady Law signing, law enforcement leaders representing the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (IACCP) and the National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence gathered at an event at the Chicago Police Department to stress the need to expand background check requirements to all firearm purchasers nationwide.

Speakers included Downers Grove Chief of Police Robert A. Porter, President of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (IACCP); Chicago Police Department Superintendent Garry F. McCarthy who hosted the event; and Baltimore County, MD Chief Jim Johnson, Chair of the National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence, a coalition of nine national law enforcement leadership organizations.

Joining the more than twelve Illinois and national law enforcement leaders was Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel who voiced his strong support for law enforcement's united effort to expand background checks.

Twenty years ago, on November 30, 1993, the Brady Bill was signed into law, requiring nationwide background checks for guns purchased through federally licensed firearms dealers.

Law enforcement leaders heralded the tremendous success of the Brady Law in blocking so many dangerous individuals from obtaining guns. "Federal and state background checks stopped more than two million prohibited purchases from federally licensed firearms dealers between 1994 – when the Brady Law took effect – and 2010," said Chief Porter. "Here in Illinois alone, background checks stopped nearly 100,000 prohibited purchasers between 1999 and 2010."

Though the Brady Law covers sales made through federally licensed firearms dealers, it does not cover private sales, such as those made online or at a gun show. Chief Johnson warned that, "Up to 40% of firearm purchases are private, and thus do not require a check under federal law. That's like permitting 40% of passengers to board an airplane without going through airport security," he said.

In Illinois, to purchase a firearm from any source – whether through a gun dealer or private seller – a resident must possess a valid Firearm Owner's Identification (FOID) card, obtained only after passing a background check. In addition to requiring background checks for all firearm purchases through gun dealers, Illinois also requires background checks for all firearm sales at gun shows. Effective January 1, 2014, private sellers must contact an Illinois State Police hotline to verify the validity of a purchaser's FOID card.

"While Illinois has taken some additional steps to keep guns out of dangerous hands, we know that states cannot go it alone," said Chief Porter. "Unfortunately, those prohibited by law from possessing firearms can evade a check by answering an Internet or print ad, or going to a gun show in too many states across

the nation. Some of those states border Illinois, which means dangerous people can simply cross state lines, bring guns back into Illinois and commit violent acts here. This must stop.”

Law enforcement leaders warned of the danger posed to both citizens and law enforcement when guns are sold without background checks. Chief Johnson pointed to new national data showing that law enforcement officers are increasingly the targets of gun violence, with ambushes the leading cause of officer firearm fatalities in 2012 and as of mid-year 2013. The number of officers killed by gunfire in ambushes jumped from five in 2011 to 15 in 2012, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. As of mid-year 2013, seven of the 17 officers killed by gunfire were targeted in ambushes. He also said that, “In 2011, for the first time in 14 years, firearms were the number one cause of death for officers killed in the line of duty, and gunfire continues to be a leading cause of officer fatalities today.”

“I clearly remember the day 20 years ago – after working countless long days and late nights to help President Clinton build bi-partisan support for the Brady Bill – that this landmark bill passed,” said Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “The Brady Bill has been a great success, but 20 years of violent acts with illegal guns have shown us that it is more important than ever to go further and increase requirements for background checks and penalties for gun crimes, as well as close loopholes that allow gun traffickers to flood our streets with guns.”

“The Brady Bill was a significant step forward in reducing the number of illegal guns, but it is still far too easy for dangerous criminals to get their hands on illegal guns – and the result is more violence,” said Chicago Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy. “Expanding background checks will help keep illegal guns from getting into our neighborhoods in the first place. And as any police chief will tell you, when background checks are required we can start to enforce it against the criminals who sell guns on our street.”

In addition to the speakers, other law enforcement leaders participating in the event included:

- Frank Kaminski, Chief of Police, Park Ridge, IL
- Steven Casstevens, Chief of Police, Buffalo Grove, IL
- Steven Stelter, Chief of Police, Brookfield, IL
- Gregory Baker, Chief of Police, South Holland, IL, representing the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)
- Kevin Shaughnessy, Chief of Police, Lemont, IL
- James R. Black, Chief of Police, Crystal Lake, IL
- Valdimir “Val” Talley, Chief of Police, Maywood, IL
- Barbara Robbins, Sergeant, University of Illinois Police Department, representing the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE)
- Holly Nearing, Retired Deputy Chief, Champaign, IL, representing the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE)
- James Lyon, Jr., Chief of Police, Northeastern Illinois University, representing the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA)
- John Kennedy, Executive Director, Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP)

ILACP is the professional organization of chiefs of police and other leaders of police and public safety organizations in the State of Illinois.

The National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence is a coalition of nine national law enforcement leadership organizations:

- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA)
- Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association (HAPCOA)
- International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA)
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA)

- National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE)
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)
- Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)
- Police Foundation (PF)

426 S. Fifth Street • Springfield, IL 62701 • Ph 217/523-3765, Fax 217/523-8352 • Toll Free 877/244-3345 • www.ilchiefs.org