



The United States Conference of Mayors

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U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS PRESIDENT MIAMI MAYOR MANNY DIAZ: CITIES VALUE GUN TRACE PROVISION IN PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET

ISSUES STATEMENT ON PROPOSAL TO LIFT THE TIAHRT AMENDMENT'S LIMIT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCESS TO FEDERAL GUN TRACE DATA

Washington, D.C. – “I can assure President Obama that the proposal in his budget to remove the barrier blocking law enforcement’s access to the federal file of gun trace data has not gone unnoticed this morning in City Halls and Police Departments across this nation. Mayors and law enforcement leaders are viewing this as a first step in turning around an ill-conceived set of laws that have compromised their efforts to fight illegal gun trafficking and the gun-related violence it spawns.

“In a comprehensive agenda on crime drafted by mayors last year and delivered to President Obama and Congress, we specifically stated that law enforcement’s access to valuable gun trace data should not be limited in any way by either state or federal law. The Tiahrt amendment’s limitation on access was the example we cited.

“In yesterday’s budget submission we got a response: If the President’s proposal is adopted, law enforcement agencies and prosecutors at every level of government would no longer be denied access to the contents of the federal Firearms Trace Database that can be used in their criminal investigations or prosecutions. Still, limits would remain on what could be done with the data: For the first time we would have access to aggregate, not just case-specific data, but that data could not be released to the public. Local officials and local law enforcement could not discuss publicly the types of weapons causing problems if their information is based on this trace data, nor could they discuss what they are doing to deal with gun trafficking if their strategies are based on this data.

“There remain many federal laws and regulations that make it harder for mayors, police, and prosecutors to keep guns out of the hands of the criminals who threaten the safety of city residents. In the days ahead we’ll continue to press the President and Congress for more sensible legislation, but today we’ll express our appreciation for one change that will help to keep all Americans a little safer.”

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor. For additional information, visit www.usmayors.org.