



May 11, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: 550 Mayors Call on Congress to Support H.R.1506/S.34 and Close the “Terror Gap”**

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Reid:

We write on behalf of more than 550 members of the bipartisan Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition to urge Congress to close the “terror gap” by passing H.R.1506/S.34, a bill giving the Department of Justice discretion to block gun sales to terror suspects on a case-by-case basis.

Proposals to close this critical flaw in our national defense have been supported by the administrations of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, as well as major law enforcement groups including the International Association of Chiefs of Police. This is an immediate national security threat that requires immediate Congressional action.

Federal law currently prohibits certain categories of dangerous people from purchasing or possessing firearms, including convicted felons, fugitives and domestic violence misdemeanants, among others. Remarkably, individuals on the terrorist watch list are not currently prohibited, making the government powerless to stop gun sales to suspected terrorists.

Just weeks ago, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released an updated report indicating that from February 2004 through December 2010, individuals on the terrorist watch list attempted to buy guns and explosives from licensed dealers 1,453 times and succeeded 1,321 times – an astonishing 91 percent success rate.

In 2007, the Bush Administration drafted a proposal to close this “terror gap” and issued a statement supporting the legislation once it was introduced. In testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Attorney General Eric Holder stated that the administration would support an identical version of the bill and said, “I think that the legislation that was proposed by the Bush Administration was well conceived.”

This gap in the gun background check system requires immediate attention. Terror suspects have already gunned down Americans in attacks within our borders and have planned to wreak further havoc. Incidents so far include:

- **Murder of U.S. troops at Fort Hood:** On November 5, 2009, 13 people were shot and killed and 30 others were wounded by Major Nidal Hasan. Hasan was able to pass a background check and buy a handgun even though he was under investigation by the

FBI for links to terrorism. FBI agents investigating Hasan were never informed that he was trying to purchase a weapon.

- **Attack on an Army-Navy recruiting station in Little Rock, Arkansas:** On June 1, 2009, Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad opened fire at an Army-Navy recruiting station, killing one private and wounding another. Police found an SKS semiautomatic rifle, a .22-caliber rifle and a .380-caliber semiautomatic handgun in Muhammad's truck. At the time of the shooting, Muhammad was under investigation by the Joint Terrorism Task Force after having been arrested in Yemen with a fake Somali passport. Muhammad was charged with murder and 16 counts of terrorist acts on June 2, 2009.
- **Murder of a Yeshiva student on the Brooklyn Bridge:** On March 1, 1994, Rashid Baz shot and killed 16-year old Ari Halberstam on an on-ramp to the bridge. Baz was armed with a machine gun, a 9 mm pistol and a "street sweeper" shotgun. The FBI later concluded the killing was a terrorist act motivated by anti-Semitism.
- **Murder at Empire State Building:** On February 23, 1997, Ali Abu Kamal opened fire on the observation deck with a handgun purchased in Florida, killing one tourist and wounding six others before killing himself. A note found in his pocket expressed hatred for the United States, Great Britain, Israel, and France.
- **Plot to attack Fort Dix:** In 2007, six terror suspects were arrested for plotting an attack on the facility after trying to buy M-16s, AK-47s, and handguns from a government informant. One of the six terror suspects pleaded guilty in October 2007 to providing firearms to illegal aliens. In December 2008, the other five suspects were convicted of conspiracy to kill U.S. military personnel.
- **Murder of CIA employees outside CIA Headquarters in Langley, Virginia:** On January 25, 1993, Mir Aimal Kasi walked between two lanes of traffic at a red light near the CIA and opened fire with an assault rifle. He shot at pointblank range into five cars. Two CIA employees were killed and three others were wounded. Kasi then fled to Pakistan, where he remained on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted list until his arrest in 1997.

Congress needs to take action to prevent more terror suspects who want to do us harm from buying firearms and explosives.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor of Boston



Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor of New York City

## Members of Mayors Against Illegal Guns:

Mayor Samuel L. Jones, Mobile, Alabama  
Mayor Ron Davis, Prichard, Alabama  
Mayor Omar Neal, Tuskegee, Alabama  
Mayor Carolyn Floyd, Kodiak, Alaska  
Mayor Patrick Hays, North Little Rock, Arkansas  
Mayor Carl A. Redus, Pine Bluff, Arkansas  
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Mayor Cheryl Cox, Chula Vista, California  
Mayor Robert Wasserman, Fremont, California  
Mayor Sukhee Kang, Irvine, California  
Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Los Angeles, California  
Mayor Rob Schroder, Martinez, California  
Mayor Paul Eaton, Montclair, California  
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Mayor Stephen P. Pougnet, Palm Springs, California  
Mayor Jennifer Hosterman, Pleasanton, California  
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Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, Richmond, California  
Mayor Kevin Johnson, Sacramento, California  
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Mayor Jerry Sanders, San Diego, California  
Mayor Chuck Reed, San Jose, California  
Mayor Miguel Pulido, Santa Ana, California  
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Mayor Richard Bloom, Santa Monica, California  
Mayor Susan Gorin, Santa Rosa, California  
Mayor Ann Johnston, Stockton, California  
Mayor Melinda Hamilton, Sunnyvale, California  
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Mayor April Capone Almon, East Haven, Connecticut  
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Mayor Scott Slifka, West Hartford, Connecticut  
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Mayor Sue Gunzburger, Broward County, Florida  
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Mayor Matti H. Bower, Miami Beach, Florida  
Mayor Bill Barnett, Naples, Florida  
Mayor Harriet Pruette, Neptune Beach, Florida  
Mayor Andre Pierre, North Miami, Florida  
Mayor Myron Rosner, North Miami Beach, Florida  
Mayor Darla Lauer, Oak Hill, Florida  
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Mayor Chuck Taylor, Circleville, Ohio  
Mayor Frank Jackson, Cleveland, Ohio

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Mayor Deborah Neale, Lakeline, Ohio  
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Mayor James B. Waller, Minerva, Ohio  
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Mayor Bob Diebold, Newark, Ohio  
Mayor Daniel R. Brooks, North College Hill, Ohio  
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Mayor Martin Zanotti, Parma Heights, Ohio  
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Mayor Howard S. Zwelling, Zanesville, Ohio  
Mayor Kitty Piercy, Eugene, Oregon

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Mayor Anthony Battalini, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Charles T. Wahl, Ambler, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Bernard Killian, Aspinwall, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Phillip Ferrizzi, Bally, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Cloyd W. Wagner, Beavertown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Stanley Goldman, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Gail Stoudt, Bernville, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Robert M. Myers, Birdsboro, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Marianne Deery, Boyertown, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor David Wonderling, Brookville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Lester J. Ward, Brownsville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Anna Marie Quader, Burgettstown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Loyce Harpster, Burnham, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Margaret Stock, Butler, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor John Hartman, Cleona, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor John Haberland, Coraopolis, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Timothy J. Carroll, Dallas, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Helen Thomas, Darby, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas R. Lloyd, Dormont, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Libby White, Doylestown, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Betty M. Hays, Eagles Mere, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor Louis J. Payne, East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Mark A. Pacilla, East Washington, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Wayne T. Murphy, Edgeworth, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph J. Cisco, Ellport, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Winfield Iobst, Emmaus, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Dorothy H. Quinn, Emsworth, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph Sinnott, Erie, Pennsylvania

Mayor Gary Foster, Evans City, Pennsylvania  
Mayor D. Gary Evans, Factoryville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Charles Moore, Falls Creek, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Olive McKeithan, Farrell, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Gary McBrien, Felton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert P. Frey, Folcroft, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Harry W. McLaughlin Jr., Fox Chapel, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Kim Phillips, Frackville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Fred C. Moyer, Jr., Freeburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Tim Martin, Freeland, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Gerald C. Yob, Freemansburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Arnie Bowser, Greensboro, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Roy Del Rosario, Hamburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Linda Thompson, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Norm Hawkes, Hatboro, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John Hoerner, Highspire, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph R. Dodson, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Betty Esper, Homestead, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Dee Dee Brown, Huntingdon Borough, Pennsylvania  
Mayor George Nicksic, Hyde Park, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Nicholas Yanosich, Industry, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Charles Ritter, Ivyland, Pennsylvania  
Mayor James C. Sanders, Jefferson, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Donald Bosh, Knoxville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Sandra Green, Kutztown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph Legnasky, Lake City, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Rick Gray, Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Christopher Blaydon, Langhorne, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Jayne C. Young, Lansdowne, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert P. Carpenter, Laporte, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Fred Feltenberger, Laureldale, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Pete Poninsky, Leetsdale, Pennsylvania  
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Mayor John L. Mark, Liverpool, Pennsylvania  
Mayor William D. Hart, Lykens, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Randy Schlegel, Lyons, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas A. Bell, Mahaffey, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Gerard J. McGlone, Jr., Malvern, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Eric B. Phillips, Manheim, Pennsylvania  
Mayor David Sturgess, Manor, Pennsylvania  
Mayor James D. Schiliro, Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Russell LaRew, Marianna, Pennsylvania  
Mayor James Frazier, McDonald, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Weslee A. Clapper-Krepps, McKean, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John Christopher Soff, Meadville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Ethel I. Kellerman, Milesburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Richard C. Trostle, Mohnton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John P. Antoline, Monaca, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John Dorin, Montoursville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Maureen A. Piselli, Morton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Raymond Bodnar, Munhall, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas Lush, Myerstown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Stephen Szymusiak, Nanty-Glo, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph Taylor, New Milford, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Frances Tkach, New Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mayor Mary M. Hetrick, Newport, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Grace Angotti, New Salem, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas Reenock, Northampton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Carol A. Jarvis, Northern Cambria, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Michele Petrini Avvisato, Old Forge, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Austin Scandiber, Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Lewis Paul Cowher, Osceola Mills, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Geoffrey L. Henry, Oxford, Pennsylvania  
Mayor William McCall, Parker, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Ardele R. Gordon, Parkside, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert Winkler, Penndel, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Michael Nutter, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John D.W. Reiley, Pottsville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Tom McMahan, Reading, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Guillermo Udarbe, Ridgway, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Desiree D. DeNicola, Roseto, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Dave Urner, Royersford, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Michael D. Thomas, Sayre, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Gary J. Hess, Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas C. Hufnagle, Sellersville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Anthony Hajjar, Seward, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joseph McGranghan, Shamokin Dam, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert J. Lucas, Sharon, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert O'Neil, Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Bruce Hockersmith, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Robert Prah, Smithton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Boyd Paul, Snow Shoe, Pennsylvania  
Mayor William Meyer, Somerset, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John Reynolds, Souderton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor James C. Kennedy, South Coatesville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Clyde R. Wadsworth, South Fork, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Sherman Metzgar, Stockertown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor William A. Boyd, Stoystown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Charles Baughman, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Warren Lubenow, St. Lawrence, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Paul R. McArdle, Summit Hill, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Richard H. Lowe, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Luke Duignam, Tatamy, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Jay R. Stover, Telford, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Charles Harper, Three Springs, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Kenneth Danser, Timblin, Pennsylvania  
Mayor William Allar, Tremont, Pennsylvania  
Mayor J. David Cutchineal, Tullytown, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Adam R. Forgie, Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas Micozzie, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Jeffrey Steffler, Wampum, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Ester Cotner, Washingtonville, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Carolyn T. Comitta, West Chester, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Donna M. Frankenfield, West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Ralph Harrington, West Elizabeth, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Dick Vargeson, Westfield, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Frank Schmidt, West Hazleton, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John W. Dindak, West Homestead, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Mary E. Popovich, West Newton, Pennsylvania

Mayor John Henry, West View, Pennsylvania  
Mayor James F. Nowalk, Whitehall, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Thomas M. Leighton, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John A. Thompson, Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania  
Mayor David Perruso, Wilson, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Larry Markel, Windsor, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Dolores Jones-Butler, Yeadon, Pennsylvania  
Mayor John Sanford, Yoe, Pennsylvania  
Mayor C. Kim Bracey, York, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Alford Shull, York Springs, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Joan Derco, Youngwood, Pennsylvania  
Mayor Angel Taveras, Providence, Rhode Island  
Mayor Joseph Riley, Charleston, South Carolina  
Mayor Joseph T. McElveen, Jr., Sumter, South Carolina  
Mayor A C Wharton, Memphis, Tennessee  
Mayor Tom Beehan, Oak Ridge, Tennessee  
Mayor Daniel Brown, Knoxville, Tennessee  
Mayor Pat M. Ahumada, Brownsville, Texas  
Mayor Richard Ward, Hurst, Texas  
Mayor Bob Kiss, Burlington, Vermont  
Mayor Christopher C. Louras, Rutland City, Vermont  
Mayor William B. Euille, Alexandria, Virginia  
Mayor Faye Prichard, Ashland, Virginia  
Mayor Dave Norris, Charlottesville, Virginia  
Mayor James P. Councill III, Franklin, Virginia  
Mayor Paul D. Fraim, Norfolk, Virginia

Mayor Annie M. Mickens, Petersburg, Virginia  
Mayor Iris Tharp, Quantico, Virginia  
Mayor Dwight C. Jones, Richmond, Virginia  
Mayor William D. Sessoms Jr, Virginia Beach, Virginia  
Mayor Daniel V. Pike, Bellingham, Washington  
Mayor H. Clarence Bauman, Chewelah, Washington  
Mayor Garland D. Walton, Connell, Washington  
Mayor Robert F. Sheckler, Des Moines, Washington  
Mayor Tamara Jenkins, DuPont, Washington  
Mayor Will Ibershof, Duvall, Washington  
Mayor Gary S. Jensen, Ferndale, Washington  
Mayor Ron (Pete) Poulson, Kalama, Washington  
Mayor David M. Ferguson, Mesa, Washington  
Mayor Daniel N. Mork, Millwood, Washington  
Mayor James F. Gerwig, Morton, Washington  
Mayor Dennis Palmer, Oakesdale, Washington  
Mayor Spencer Nichols, Pe Ell, Washington  
Mayor Paul Warden, Prosser, Washington  
Mayor Terry Anderson, SeaTac, Washington  
Mayor Mike McGinn, Seattle, Washington  
Mayor Mary B. Verner, Spokane, Washington  
Mayor Dianne W. White, Stanwood, Washington  
Mayor Marilyn Strickland, Tacoma, Washington  
Mayor Tom Barrett, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Mayor Richard Johns, Rhinelander, Wisconsin  
Mayor Al Richards, Saint Francis, Wisconsin