

Military, Law, and more ...

NSSF welcomes Rep. Clay Higgins' Law Enforcement Protection and Privacy Act to put teeth in legislation

NSSF, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, welcomes U.S. Rep. Clay Higgins' (R-La.) introduction of H.R. 1698, the Law Enforcement Protection and Privacy Act, which will enhance safeguards for protected firearm trace data. This legislation is vital to ensuring firearm trace data, which is protected by federal law, remains safeguarded from misuse that threatens investigations and lives. The bill puts "teeth to the Tiaht rider," by providing accountability for individuals who purposefully and unlawfully release this sensitive law enforcement information that is reserved for use in law enforcement investigations.



U.S. Rep. Clay Higgins introduced H.R. 1698 which is known as the Law Enforcement Protection and Privacy Act.

"This legislation is long overdue and necessary to send a strong message that there will now be consequences for those who would unlawfully disclose law enforcement sensitive firearm trace data that jeopardizes ongoing criminal investigations and puts the lives of law enforcement officers, undercover agents and witnesses at risk," said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel. "It will prevent the unauthorized release of trace data by ATF and others to gun control groups and agenda-driven media outlets who have misused the data to launch 'name-and-shame' attacks to smear the reputation of law-abiding members of the firearm industry. We thank Congressman Clay Higgins for his leadership in protecting the integrity of ongoing

criminal investigations and the lives of law enforcement officers and witnesses including licensed retailers and their reputations in their communities."

The Law Enforcement Protection and Privacy Act:

- Makes clear that the contents of National Trace Center is not subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.
- Establishes penalties for the unauthorized release of firearm trace data up to \$10,000 for first violation per disclosure of an individual record and \$25,000 for any other violations. It would also result in loss of access to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,

- Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) National Tracing Center (NTC) Firearm Tracing System (FTS) for one year for those who fail to comply with the law.
- Provides federal firearms licensees (FFLs) a private right of action against a Federal agency or a local, tribal or foreign entity if data concerning them is unlawfully released, and if the FFL prevails the FFL would be awarded the greater of triple the amount of damages suffered or \$25,000 for each discloser of information, punitive damages as the court allows and attorney's fee and court costs.
- Removes sovereign immunity as a defense to actions to enforce violations of the law. The Tiaht amendment prohibits

the release of firearm trace data to anyone other than law enforcement or prosecutors investigating a crime. Currently, there are no penalties for when individuals or agencies ignore this law and release this data to advance a political gun control agenda. While ATF could, under memorandum of understanding, disallow access to the data by those who violate the agreement, ATF has never enforced that provision. Unfortunately, this protected data has been abused, including by the ATF under the Biden administration, in "name-and-shame" efforts to malign firearm retailers, despite ATF's longstanding admonition noting that trace data "in no way suggests

that either the federal firearms licensed dealer (FFL) or the first purchaser has committed criminal acts."

When a firearm is recovered at a crime scene or criminal arrest, a police department may forward information to the ATF to track the chain of custody of a firearm through the licensed distribution system to the original retail purchaser. The ATF then sends back the information to the reporting agency so they can use it in a criminal case, if warranted. ATF also uses the data in support of illegal firearms trafficking investigations.

Public release of gun trace data outside law enforcement would jeopardize ongoing criminal investigations, putting the lives of law enforcement, witnesses and others at risk. This is why Congress, the ATF and law enforcement, including the nation's largest police organization, the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), agree on the importance of securing this sensitive data. Access to gun trace data should only be available to law enforcement taking part in a bona-fide investigation, and law enforcement already has the access it needs for this purpose. No law enforcement agency has ever been denied access to trace data as part of a criminal investigation.

For more information, visit nssf.org.

NSSF vows to continue fight for citizens' rights to remove burdensome reporting from businesses

From the Outdoor Wire

The Treasury Department announced that it plans to eliminate the CTA reporting requirement for U.S. citizens, domestic reporting companies, and their beneficial owners, and will be submitting proposed rule changes to narrow the scope of the CTA reporting requirement to apply only to foreign reporting companies.

The Treasury has signaled that foreign companies will still be required to file BOI reports in accordance with the CTA, however those entities will not face any fines or penalties until after further extended deadlines, which are expected to be issued no later than March 21st. Foreign reporting companies are entities which are formed under the laws of a foreign country and are registered to do business in the U.S. NSSF® supports the decision by the Treasury to remove the intrusive and burdensome reporting requirement from U.S. businesses. NSSF will continue to support ongoing legislative efforts to delay or repeal the onerous and intrusive CTA reporting requirements. NSSF will review the forthcoming regulatory actions by the Treasury Department for opportunities to comment on behalf of its industry.

The Environment and Conservation

Gov. Lee and TDEC Commissioner Salyers announce nearly \$1 mil loan for Munford to improve water infrastructure

NASHVILLE – Gov. Bill Lee and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner David Salyers announced a \$994,097 loan for the City of Munford to improve water infrastructure.

The loan is from the State Revolving Fund Loan Program and was approved by the Tennessee Local Development Authority.

"Tennessee continues to support infrastructure investments for a growing state, including water quality improvements," said Lee. "We are pleased these funds will make projects affordable to deliver important resources for Ten-

"Quality water infrastructure is crucial for a community," said Salyers. "This program provides financial assistance for local leaders to meet a demand that might be difficult to achieve otherwise. We are glad we can assist with this excellent program."

nesseans across the state." "Quality water infrastructure is crucial for a community," said Salyers. "This program provides financial assistance for local

leaders to meet a demand that might be difficult to achieve otherwise. We are glad we can assist with this excellent program."

The City of Munford loan comes from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program. It will address wastewater treatment plant improvements. The loan has a 20-year term at 2.63 percent interest.

Through the State Revolving Fund Loan Program, communities, utility districts, and water and wastewater authorities can obtain loans with lower inter-

est rates than through private financing. These low-interest-rate loans can vary from zero percent to below market rate, based on each community's economic health.

This fiscal year, TDEC has awarded \$38,656,173 in drinking water loans and \$75,720,597 in clean water loans to meet the state's infrastructure needs. During fiscal year 2024, TDEC awarded \$54,108,182 in drinking water loans and \$85,350,843

in clean water loans for a total of \$139,459,025.

Tennessee's Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program has awarded more than \$2 billion in low-interest loans since its inception in 1987.

The state's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program has awarded more than \$300 million in low-interest loans since its inception in 1996.



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