

House Republican Press Release

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State Rep. John Frey proposes legislation to Re-fund Gun Trafficking Task Force



Bill aimed at stopping illegal sale of firearms to criminals

State Rep. John Frey (R- Ridgefield) has co-sponsored two bills to re-fund the dormant Gun Trafficking Task Force, a group of local law enforcement personnel charged with targeting individuals who purchase firearms legally and resell them to criminals.

HB-6089 and SB-192 are currently in the General Assembly's Public Safety and Security Committee waiting for action. The proposed legislation calls for \$1 million annually, beginning with the 2007-08 budget.

Rep. Frey supported the creation of the statewide gun trafficking task force in 2000. Its primary responsibility is to enforce the state's gun distribution and possession laws. To date, the task force seized guns from a variety of sources, including known gang members in the Capitol city, illegal sales that took place over the Internet, and stolen firearms. The task force was created in 2000 and enjoyed many successes before having its funding pulled in 2002, one of a minimal number of cuts approved by the Democrat-controlled legislature.

When the State-Wide Firearms Trafficking Task Force was funded in 2000 took 379 guns off the streets of our cities in Connecticut. In 2001, without any funding 51 firearms where confiscated. A total of 485 guns have been seized since the inception of the task force.

In addition, the firearms task force has actively "traced" all seized firearms in the state. This provides real time information to investigators about the origins of seized guns so that investigators can identify those who are responsible for diverting weapons into the illegal market.

"The escalation in gun violence in our major cities needs to be dealt with before our cities become uninhabitable. Reestablishing the gun trafficking task force is the one definite step we can take that can have an instant impact by taking illegal firearms off the streets and out of the hands of criminals and children," Rep. Frey said.

“We have enough firearms legislation on the books in Connecticut, which law-abiding gun owners follow,” said Rep. Frey. “The legislature should prioritize, keeping firearms away from the hands of criminals illegally, and re-funding this task force, which has already proven successful when it was funded, would certainly help us achieve that goal.”

“This gun task force, if funded, is a perfect example of something government should encourage to improve public safety in Connecticut,” added Rep. Frey.