

## United States Senate

August 15, 2013

Mr. B. Todd Jones  
Office of the Director  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives  
99 New York Avenue, NE  
Room 5S 144  
Washington, DC 20226

Re: Conversation of August 1, 2013; appointment of an ATF, anti-gang coordinator.

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am writing to congratulate you on the Senate confirming you as the director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). I supported you because ATF needs to operate under the authority of a confirmed director who can firmly implement the bureau's illegal gun and anti-gang policies.

As we discussed during our telephone conversation of August 1, 2013, the federal government does not give illegal guns and violent criminal gangs the attention they deserve. These problems are a plague on Chicago and threaten the safety of many other Illinois communities. The current situation is intolerable and must be fixed.

During our conversation, you and I agreed ATF should appoint a Chicago based, ATF, anti-gang coordinator for Illinois. Further, this anti-gang coordinator should develop an Illinois specific anti-gang strategy and make regular reports to you on the progress of federal, state, and local agencies' anti-gang efforts.

The rationale for this ATF, anti-gang coordinator is clear. Hundreds of Chicago's citizens have been wounded or killed by gangs of national significance - such as the Gangster Disciples (GDs) and the Latin Kings (LKs) - that are based in Chicago. These gangs are devastating entire neighborhoods. For example, according to the Chicago Police Department during 2012 eighty-percent (80%) of the 500+ murders were gang related; this year, the murder count is over 200. Further, Jens Ludwig, the director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab, reports these murders cost Chicago \$2.5 billion a year, or about \$2,500 per household. The members of these gangs show no pity for their victims. Worse, the problem is spreading throughout Illinois.

You and I must work together to crush the GDs, LKs, and all other violent gangs in Illinois. To this end, from my position on the Senate Appropriations Committee I argued for and obtained an additional \$19.5 million to fight street gangs of national significance. Obtaining this money was among my top priorities because it will go to the U.S. Department of Justice

(DOJ) and its law enforcement agencies with directions that they use this money to locate, arrest, prosecute, and convict members of gangs that have a national profile, like the GDs and LKs.

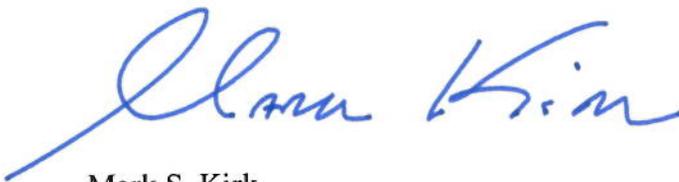
Separately, should the Appropriations Committee's bill become law then the ATF will receive additional funds to hire more agents. The Committee's report language directs ATF to take action against gangs. Further, the legislation contains an increase of \$12 million for the DOJ's Violent Gang and Gun Crime Reduction Program (which was modeled on Project Safe Neighborhoods).

A successful campaign to destroy violent gangs depends on the coordination of all levels of government. ATF and the anti-gang coordinator must work with the Drug Enforcement Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigations, and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. The most terrorized, gang-infested communities must get special attention.

Your involvement, oversight, and vision will be the foundation of any successful anti-gang campaign. I stand ready to work with you. Joining your leadership and the expertise of a Chicago-based, anti-gang coordinator we can construct in Illinois the nation's most effective program for dismantling gangs, protecting families, and rebuilding economically vibrant communities.

Again, thank you for your commitment to fighting violent criminal gangs and removing illegal guns from our communities. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss our anti-gang agenda.

Sincerely,



Mark S. Kirk  
U.S. Senator

cc:  
Mr. Gregory R. Rasnake  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives  
*Chief, Office of Public and Governmental Affairs*  
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