



Leahy and Collins Announce Agreement with NRA On Legislation to Combat Gun Trafficking

April 10, 2013

WASHINGTON – Senators Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) announced on Wednesday an agreement has been reached with the National Rifle Association (NRA) on a modified version of the Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act of 2013 that addresses all substantive concerns and provides law enforcement officials with the tools they need to investigate and prosecute illegal gun trafficking and straw purchasing.

“Senator Collins and I are both strong supporters and advocates of Second Amendment rights for law-abiding Americans. We also agree that our law enforcement officials deserve our support in their efforts to keep guns out of the wrong hands,” Leahy said. “We worked with the NRA and with several other Senators to ensure that nothing in our bill infringes on the Second Amendment rights of lawful gun owners and purchasers, while still providing a strong new set of tools for law enforcement officials. We are pleased that the NRA agrees with us that this legislation is a focused approach to combat the destructive practices of straw purchasing and firearms trafficking while protecting the Second Amendment rights of Americans.”

Collins said “Our bill would help keep guns out of the hands of criminals without infringing upon the Second Amendment rights of law abiding citizens. It protects legitimate sales and would not penalize legal transactions nor place unnecessary burdens on lawful transactions. I am pleased to have worked out differences with the NRA on bipartisan legislation that would help keep guns out of the hands of dangerous criminals and individuals with severe mental illnesses, and give law enforcement the tools they need to investigate and prosecute these crimes more effectively.”

The bipartisan Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act, which was reported by the Judiciary Committee on a bipartisan vote in March, will for the first time create specific criminal statutes prohibiting the trafficking and straw purchase of firearms, and also strengthen other law enforcement tools to assist in investigating these crimes. The modified version Leahy and Collins announced Wednesday includes these important provisions and further technical language to ensure that lawful gun purchasers can buy firearms from licensed dealers to give as bona fide gifts, raffle or contest prizes, gratuities, or bonuses. The modified version also includes other technical amendments to conform the bill to existing law regarding the forfeiture of firearms and ammunition.

“Addressing the serious role that straw-purchasing and gun trafficking play in supplying criminals with firearms should be among our top priorities in addressing gun violence. We look forward to seeing this important bipartisan legislation passed by the Senate,” Leahy said.