Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3605

September 29, 2026

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
Office of the President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Vice President J.D. Vance
The White House
Office of the Vice President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump and Vice President Vance:

We write to alert you to an illegal national gun registry now containing 1,414,088,513 records of guns and gun owners.[1] These records, maintained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) at its Martinsburg, West Virginia facility, were obtained from out-of-business firearms dealers and include names, addresses, Social Security numbers, and the specific firearms purchased.[2]

Federal law forbids this. The *Firearm Owners' Protection Act of 1986* prohibits "any system of registration of firearms, firearms owners, or firearms transactions." Additionally, Congressional appropriations riders bar the ATF from centralizing these records and searching them by name. Despite those clear restrictions, the registry has grown from roughly 920 million records in 2021 to more than 1.4 billion today, about half a billion more within four years.

Vice President Vance correctly described the danger posed by ATF's registry on Fox News:

> "This database is ultimately a back door to a gun registry in this country. And if you look at what liberals have done in Europe, what they've done in Australia: once you allow a gun registry, you effectively allow the disarming of your citizenry. This is ultimately about destroying the Second Amendment."[3]

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[1] LINK TO RECENT ATF LETTER

[2] In 2021, a leaked document obtained by Gun Owners of America revealed that ATF was processing over 50 million gun records per year, prompting Congress to investigate. Later in 2021, ATF admitted to Congress that it had over 920 million gun records in its system. This resulted in bicameral legislation known as the No REGISTRY Rights Act and several annual appropriations rider drafts. A 2026 update from ATF revealed the current record count to be well over a billion records.

[3] https://x.com/GunOwners/status/1814364093358145864?s=20

A 2022 Gun Owners of America analysis also confirmed that the database can be searched and filtered by make, model, and firearm type—allowing the creation of targeted lists of firearm owners.[4] And when questioned, President Biden's ATF Director even admitted to circumventing these protections against federal gun registration.[5]

Even now, ATF is advancing a rule (RIN 1140-AA95) that would require dealers to retain transaction records for up to 30 years and then transfer them to ATF for another 30 years—effectively creating lifetime registration of every legal purchase.[6]

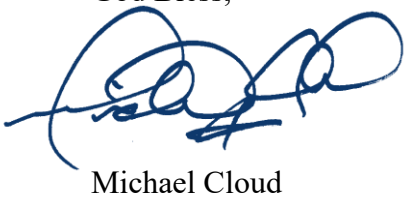
In addition, although we appreciate the reporting on gun traces conducted during investigations, we'd like to know the specific number of traces that have led to a criminal conviction, and a few examples of such cases.

Congress has already spoken. The American people need executive action to enforce that law. We urge you to:

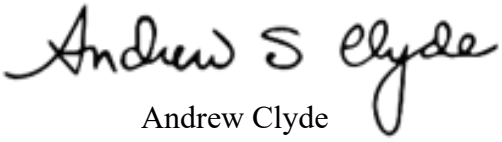
1. Direct an immediate, independent investigation of ATF's Martinsburg database;
2. Order the prompt and verifiable destruction of any records maintained in violation of the 1986 Firearm Owners Protection Act and the appropriations prohibitions; and
3. Ensure that any final rule on record retention fully complies with those same prohibitions.

American citizens are entitled to exercise their Second Amendment rights without the federal government compiling searchable lists of their names and firearms. We ask for your decisive leadership to end this registry and prevent its expansion.

God Bless,



Michael Cloud
Member of Congress



Andrew Clyde
Member of Congress

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[4] Johnston. ATF's Illegal Gun Owner Registry. *Gun Owners of America*. 2022. https://www.gunowners.org/wp-content/uploads/GOA-ATFs-Illegal-Gun-Owner-Registry.pdf

[5] **ATF Director Dettelbach:** "We are, as far as I know the only customer that pays additional money to have search function taken out of Adobe Acrobat."
**Rep. Clyde:** "So how is it searched?"
**Director Dettelbach:** "We do not search in the specific ways that Congress has said that we can't search… [like] by personal identifier… [Instead,] We search by serial numbers."
https://x.com/GunOwners/status/1648401654213902342?s=20

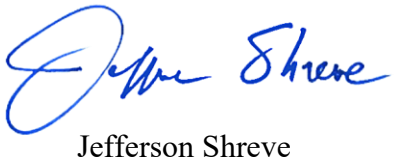
[6] https://www.atf.gov/rules-and-regulations/rulemaking-notices/firearm-records-retention-periods-rin-1140-aa95



Lauren Boebert
Member of Congress



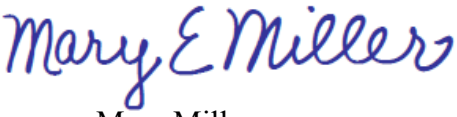
Eric Burlison
Member of Congress



Jefferson Shreve
Member of Congress



Sheri Biggs
Member of Congress



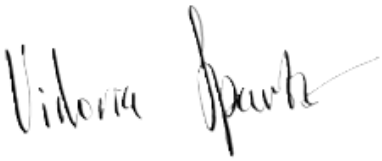
Mary Miller
Member of Congress



Dave Taylor
Member of Congress



Kat Cammack
Member of Congress



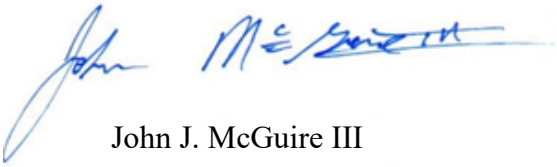
Victoria Spartz
Member of Congress



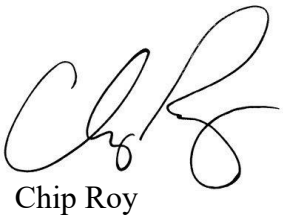
Eli Crane
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Clay Higgins
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John J. McGuire III
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Chip Roy
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Riley Moore
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Scott Perry
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Ralph Norman
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Pat Harrigan
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Ben Cline
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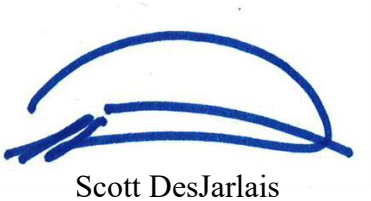
Warren Davidson
Member of Congress



Clay Fuller
Member of Congress



John Rose
Member of Congress



Scott DesJarlais
Member of Congress



Andy Harris
Member of Congress

CC: ATF Director Cekada, Acting Attorney General Blanche