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NEWS RELEASE

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GUN VIOLENCE TASK FORCE SEIZES HUMMER AND ARRESTS TWO IN STRAW PURCHASE CONSPIRACY

District Attorney Lynne Abraham, Attorney General Tom Corbett and Police Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey today announced that the Gun Violence Task Force has seized and intends to seek forfeiture of a 2003 Hummer owned by Gary Jackson. Jackson and a co-conspirator, Ronald McBeth, were recently arrested by the Task Force in connection with a straw purchase conspiracy in which Mc Beth is accused of straw purchasing a handgun for Jackson, a convicted felon on parole. It is alleged that Jackson used the Hummer to drive the pair to and from a gun store outside of the city where McBeth purchased 2 handguns, one for Jackson, along with ammunition.

As a convicted felon, Jackson is prohibited from even possessing a handgun. Task Force agents followed the pair from the gun store, and Jackson was subsequently arrested in possession of the weapon. Both are charged with violating 18 PA.C.S. 6111, Illegal Transfer of Firearms, a felony of the 3rd degree; 18 PA.C.S. 4904, Unsworn Falsification, a misdemeanor of the 2nd degree; 18 PA.C.S. 4911, Tampering with Public Records or Information, a felony of the 3rd degree; and 18 PA.C.S. 903, Conspiracy, a felony of the 3rd degree. Jackson is also charged with violating 18 PA.C.S. 6105, Person not to Possess Firearm, a felony of the 2nd degree.

“We intend to make straw purchasing as costly as possible to deter those who would otherwise involve themselves in this type of scheme. We will use every available enforcement tool to reduce gun violence” said Abraham.

“In attempting to illegally purchase a handgun, Jackson, a convicted felon, has not only lost his freedom, but also his high-priced vehicle,” said Corbett. “The Gun Violence Task Force is actively using all laws available to rein in gun violence in Philadelphia.”

In December 2006, with funding from the State Legislature and spearheaded by State Sen. Vincent Fumo, District Attorney Lynne Abraham and Attorney General Tom Corbett launched the Gun Violence Task Force to attack the proliferation of illegal guns on city streets. Composed of veteran investigators and seasoned prosecutors, and working in close coordination with the Philadelphia Police Department, the Task Force began operations in Southwest Philadelphia and has since expanded into all six of the city's police Divisions.

Since it began in December 2006, the Task Force has opened over 600 investigations involving the illegal transfer of firearms, made 165 arrests, and seized 264 firearms. In addition, the Task Force has assisted Philadelphia police in solving numerous shootings, burglaries, and at least one homicide.

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