

# NEWS



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## MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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### **Mayor Street Presented at National Summit on Illegal Guns in New York City**

**New York** – Philadelphia Mayor John F. Street joined Mayor Bloomberg and 13 other mayors from across the country today at a national summit designed to focus attention on the issue of illegal guns and violence in American cities.

“During the course of my administration, we have been strongly committed to public safety,” said Mayor Street. “We shut down more than 300 drug markets and serious crime has declined 17 percent. Philadelphia is a safer city for our efforts. However, we’re not immune to the national increase in violence. Guns are too easy to get and there are far too many on our streets.”

Designed to bring together Mayors from around the country to share cutting-edge policing and legal strategies and to launch a coordinated coalition to combat illegal guns and gun crime, the summit highlighted the growing problem that illegal guns pose nationwide.

“There are common elements in our cities that we all are facing,” Mayor Street said. “We need tougher gun laws. We need greater support and resources from the Federal government to help cities protect their citizens. We need to involve the Faith community to raise levels of civility in our neighborhoods. We need to begin sending messages of love, hope and peace to counteract the anger that is out there. We need to continue this dialogue and work together on all of these issues.”

This first-ever Gun Summit was a daylong event in New York City that began with a morning symposium outlining best practices from cities across the country followed by a panel of the nation's leading experts on gun crimes. The mayors also discussed state and federal legislation and litigation efforts and identified specific issue areas where they can collaborate.

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## **Add Two/Mayor Street at National Summit on Illegal Guns**

The goal of the Summit was to create a unified coalition of major American cities dedicated to working together on the issues of gun violence and illegal gun trafficking, sharing successful initiatives and identifying areas where cities can work collaboratively.

At the best practices panel discussion, Mayor Street discussed Philadelphia's Operation Safer Streets and its four-pronged approach to preventing and reducing violent crime that employs targeted policing to flood "Hot Spots" with officers, gun reduction efforts to get guns off our streets, increased community engagement to prevent violence and share information and violence prevention efforts through increased social services and other City services.

Since its inception in February, Operation Safer Streets has realized growing community support with Town Watch groups facilitating or presenting at more than 115 meetings in the "Hot Spots," and receiving 131 calls and tips (83 related to drugs, 31 related to guns and 17 related to City services). Nineteen new Town Watch groups have been trained and 330 new Town Watch members have been recruited.

The results of this greater awareness coupled with more focused policing and information sharing can be seen in a recent crackdown that netted 80 arrests, narcotics with a street value of \$800,000, 27 firearms, and \$92,000 in cash. It was good work by the Philadelphia Police Department, aided by tips and information from the community. Year to date comparisons of guns confiscated in the Hot Spots this year versus last year show a 66 percent increase, but Philadelphia is still on pace with last year's homicide totals.

"Operation Safer Streets is not a short-term operation," Mayor Street said. "It's a comprehensive long-term commitment to smarter policing, engaged communities, a faith based civility campaign, intensive social services, and stronger gun laws. All these steps are geared to ensure Philadelphia remains a safe and livable community for us all."

In addition to Mayors Bloomberg and Menino, the following mayors attended the Summit: Mayor Byron Brown, Dallas Mayor Laura Miller, Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez, Jackson Mayor Frank Melton, Jersey City Mayor Jerramiah Healy, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, Philadelphia Mayor John Street, Providence Mayor David Cicilline, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, Trenton Mayor Douglas Palmer, Tulsa Mayor Kathy Taylor, Washington, DC Mayor Anthony Williams and Yonkers Mayor Amicone.

At the summit's conclusion, the Mayors signed a joint Statement of Principles expressing their intent to target "irresponsible gun dealers who break the law by knowingly selling guns to straw purchasers." The Mayors also said they would oppose any efforts in Congress to limit cities' right to access and use gun tracing data, a valuable tool for law enforcement.

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