



The United States Conference of Mayors

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For Immediate Release
April 24, 2007

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THE NATION'S MAYORS CALL FOR A "COMMON SENSE APPROACH" TO GUNS AND CRIME

Trenton Mayor Douglas Palmer Testifies Before House Judiciary Committee

Washington, D.C. – Just a week after the shootings at VA Technical University, U.S. Conference of Mayors President Trenton (NJ) Mayor Douglas H. Palmer testified today before The United States House of Representatives' Judiciary Committee on behalf of the nation's mayors regarding crime prevention, law enforcement and gun safety legislation in America.

In his statement, Mayor Palmer told the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, "Rampant gun violence is more than a national tragedy. It is a disgrace."

Palmer also called for a common-sense approach to guns in America saying, "Mayors know all too well that public safety must be their first responsibility; for only when cities are safe can mayors focus on other priorities such as public education, job creation and affordable housing. The dangers raised by inadequate protections in any city USA threaten us all."

In January of this year, Mayor Palmer unveiled a 10-point legislative agenda, *Strong Cities, Strong Families, for a Strong America*, that calls for a stronger federal-local partnership on hometown security, as well as Congressional support for anti-crime programs. Specifically, the mayors want funding for the COPS and the local block grant restored, as well as additional resources to promote crime prevention and positive alternatives for youth.

In the 1990s, mayors and police chiefs put extensive effort into increasing public safety and establishing a partnership with the federal government. As a result, many cities saw crime rates drop to historic lows. However, in recent years, those partnerships were dissolved and crime is now on the rise with gun violence becoming more and more prevalent.

"We simply have to act now, and the nation's mayors are ready, willing and able to stand with this Subcommittee and everyone in Congress who wants to help in moving forward a positive law enforcement and prevention agenda," Palmer concluded.

Mayor Palmer's full testimony is available on the Conference's website at www.usmayors.org.

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The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.