Beat: News

US Attorney Announces Enhanced Enforcement Targeting

Designated High Crime Areas in Detroit

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USPA NEWS - United States Attorney Dawn N. Ison, along with Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney Kym Worthy and Detroit Police Chief James E. White announced a targeted law enforcement initiative that is designed to reduce gun violence in Detroit's neighborhoods with the highest incidence of violent crime.

Joining in the announcement were Special Agent in Charge James A. Tarasca, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Detroit Division, Special Agent in Charge Paul Vanderplow, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Studies have shown that violent crime is commonly driven by a small number of actors and is highly concentrated within communities. And we know that as temperatures rise, so too does violent crime in these neighborhoods. With the summer now upon us, the United States Attorney's Office, along with the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, the Detroit Police Department, the ATF, and the FBI, has launched an effort to strategically focus resources on the most dangerous neighborhoods of the city. These neighborhoods in the 8th and 9th Precincts lead the city in fatal and non-fatal shootings, robberies, and aggravated assaults with a gun in 2022.

The strategy is a part of the United States Attorney's Office's Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) initiative. PSN continues to be the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders works together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. PSN is an evidence-based program that focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs to pursue lasting reductions in crime.

The unified approach to reducing gun violence announced today includes enhanced federal, state, and local law enforcement collaboration and coordinated prosecution efforts to boost existing and ongoing partnerships to address violent crime across the city.

Under the strategy, felons arrested in one of the designated areas in possession of a firearm will be immediately prosecuted federally. In addition, any individual who uses a firearm to commit a crime of violence or drug trafficking crime will also be considered for federal prosecution. The "hot spot" strategy for federal enforcement began on Memorial Day and will last until Labor Day in September.

Importantly, this enforcement strategy will be paired with enhanced efforts from the City of Detroit to address blight and other quality of life issues for residents living in the designated enforcement areas.

"Through this partnership, we will focus strategically on the drivers of violence in our most dangerous communities. This strategy is designed to significantly reduce violence by narrowly focusing on those who are committing it and to give these neighborhoods back to the majority of the residents who want to live in peace," stated U.S. Attorney Dawn N. Ison. "Along with our enforcement strategy, my office is committed to working with community leaders in these neighborhoods and the City of Detroit to improve the quality of life in the areas that we have targeted for enhanced enforcement," continued Ison.

Mayor Duggan stated, "The two areas Detroit Police have been intensely focused on are the 8th and 9th Precincts, where we typically see the highest rate of gun-related crimes, especially during the summer months. I'm deeply appreciative to the US Attorney's Office for implementing the new policy of having cases of felons found in possession of a gun in these precincts go immediately to federal prosecution. Federal law enforcement agencies in Detroit have worked very closely with DPD and the community. This new initiative makes it clear they will remain strong community partners in making neighborhoods safer for Detroit residents."

Prosecutor Worthy stated, "The proliferation of gun violence in Detroit is staggering. We must not be deterred from attacking this problem. People with previous records in the 8th and 9th Precinct will be prosecuted federally if they are in possession of weapons. We are hopeful that our collaboration with the U.S. Attorney's Office will have an impact on this important issue. "

Chief White stated, "Detroiters deserve policing excellence. The continued collaboration provides another layer of protection for our community. The relationship between DPD and the US Attorney's Office plays an instrumental role in keeping Detroiters safe. I would

like to thank US Attorney Dawn Ison for her commitment and leadership to our community."

"Through information sharing, strategic enforcement efforts, and federal prosecutions, law enforcement agencies across Detroit continue to work together to combat crime in the most violent areas of our city," said James A. Tarasca, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Detroit Field Office. "The FBI will contribute to this initiative by targeting those who commit armed robberies of businesses, along with the leadership of gangs and criminal enterprises that drive the violence in our communities. By doing so, we will ensure our neighborhoods and communities are safer places to live and work."

"Regardless of the time of year, ATF has no tolerance for criminals who continue to terrorize our communities' by utilizing firearms as a tool of violence," said, ATF Special Agent in Charge Paul Vanderplow. "The men and women of ATF are dedicated to identifying and apprehending those who choose violence. ATF stands proudly with our Federal, State, and Local law enforcement partners within the State of Michigan to prosecute these individuals."

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