Delaware House Passes Bill Requiring Reporting of Lost and Stolen Firearms

Governor thanks lawmakers for providing important law enforcement tool

(Dover, DE) Governor Markell issued the following comment after the passage of Senate Bill 16 in the Delaware House of Representatives:

“Law enforcement tells us straw purchasers have two main excuses when the gun they purchased ends up at a crime scene: ‘I lost that weapon’ or ‘That weapon was stolen.’ By requiring individuals to report their gun lost or stolen, this bill helps eliminate those excuses once and for all. I want to thank Sen. Henry, Rep. Barbieri, and other members of the General Assembly for providing law enforcement with this important tool to reduce straw purchases.”

With the passage of SB 16, Delaware becomes only the 8th state to require the reporting of lost or stolen firearms. (The District of Columbia also requires such reporting, as do numerous cities and towns.) Senate Bill 16 will require gun owners to report the loss or theft of their firearm to police within 7 days of discovering the weapon is missing. Violators will be subject to a fine of $75-$100 for a first offense and a fine of $100-$250 for a second offense. A third offense is a class G felony.

The bill is one of the gun safety measures proposed by Gov. Markell, Lt. Gov. Denn and Attorney General Biden in the wake of the Newtown, CT massacre and other recent mass shootings. The prime sponsors of the bill are Sen. Margaret Rose Henry (D-Wilmington East) and Rep. Michael Barbieri (D-Newark).
The bill passed the Delaware Senate on May 2, 2013. The Governor intends to sign the bill in the near future.

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