



News Release



CONGRESSMAN

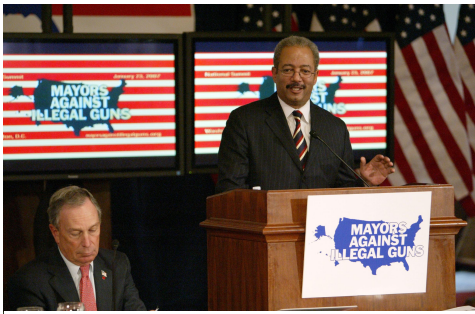
Chaka Fattah

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, January 24, 2007

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CONGRESSMAN FATTAH TAKES AIM AT ILLEGAL GUNS IN ADDRESS TO MAYORS' SUMMIT ON CAPITOL HILL



Congressman Chaka Fattah (D-PA) speaks at the Mayors Against Illegal Guns Summit convened by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

WASHINGTON D.C. -- Congressman Chaka Fattah (D-PA) carried the message of Philadelphia's efforts to combat illegal gun violence to Capitol Hill this week as he addressed members of the Mayors Against Illegal Guns Coalition at their 2007 National Summit.

Speaking to a bi-partisan audience of the nation's leading mayors, convened by New York City's Michael R. Bloomberg and Mayor Thomas Menino of Boston, for their first-ever Summit, Congressman Fattah outlined the steps underway in Philadelphia to remove illegal guns from the streets. Those measures include stepped up and targeted policing, and reward programs.

Fattah is a member of the new bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Illegal Guns, co-chaired by two Democrats and two Republicans.

"Illegal guns and the violence committed by those who possess them are at the center of the criminal activity on our city streets. Removal of illegal guns is the point at which citizens, policy makers and law enforcement officials must join this fight today," Fattah said.

"But we must remember that real opportunity in the form of education and jobs will provide the best hope for helping our young people turn away from illegal gun use and crime in general," Fattah added.

The Philadelphia Congressman addressed the Mayors' Coalition just hours before President Bush delivered his State of the Union speech. Fattah said the President needs to be talking to America's mayors to determine the true state of the union. He said the billions of dollars being wasted in Iraq could go to rebuilding our cities and making them safe.

"The first line of defense in the battle against illegal guns," Fattah said, "Is a mayor willing to act on bold and innovative strategies."

Fattah was introduced at the Summit by Congressman James Clyburn (D-SC), the Democratic Whip, and joined by other members of a new Task Force on Illegal Guns.

Mayors are meeting with members of Congress to discuss ways to correct recent federal restrictions on the use of federal gun trace data, which have seriously hampered law enforcement efforts to keep guns out of the hands of criminals.

Mayors from 120 cities, 44 states and the District of Columbia have joined forces to make America's cities safer by cracking down on illegal guns.

In addition to Bloomberg and Menino, among those in the audience for Fattah's speech were Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago; a leader of the Mayors Against Illegal Guns Coalition; Mayor Tom Barrett of Milwaukee, a former Congressman; Mayor John F. Street of Philadelphia; and Mayor Doug Palmer of Trenton, N.J., president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors which is holding its Winter Meeting in Washington January 24-26.

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