

[CLOSE WINDOW](#)**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****PR- 242-07****July 17, 2007****MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND CITIZENS CRIME COMMISSION UNVEIL GUNS=PRISON PUBLIC SERVICE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN*****Campaign Highlights New Penalties Part of Toughest Illegal Gun Possession Law in Country***

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Citizens Crime Commission of New York City (CCC) President Richard Aborn today unveiled a new Commission-sponsored public service campaign to highlight the new penalties for illegal gun possession in New York. The campaign, GUNS=PRISON, will feature posters calling attention to the 3 ½ year prison sentence given to anyone caught carrying an illegal loaded handgun in New York. The poster advertisements will be displayed on donated space on phone kiosks, in buses and subways and in restaurants, bars, and nightclubs. The law that increased the mandatory minimum sentence for illegal possession of a loaded handgun to 3 ½ years was passed last year by the State Legislature at the Mayor's request and is the toughest such law in the country. The law also eliminated a loophole that allowed judges far too much discretion in sentencing. In October 2006, Governor Pataki signed these changes into law. The Mayor and Mr. Aborn were joined by Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, Metropolitan Transportation Authority CEO Elliot Sander, Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson, New York County District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, Kings County District Attorney Charles Hynes, Queens County District Attorney Richard Brown, Richmond County District Attorney Dan Donovan, and Special Narcotics Prosecutor for New York City Bridget G. Brennan.

"Last year, our Administration succeeded in pushing through a law that gives New York the toughest penalty in the country for carrying an illegal loaded handgun," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Now, if you are convicted, you will serve a minimum of 3½ years behind bars – no exceptions. I want to thank the Citizens Crime Commission and its president, Richard Aborn, for their support on this important issue."

"Almost 70 percent of murders in New York City are committed with firearms and the vast majority of those weapons are illegal," said Richard Aborn. "These ads, much like the law itself, are crystal clear in their simplicity – carry an illegal gun in New York and go to prison for 3 ½ years. We are hopeful that this hard-hitting campaign will help keep guns off our streets by showing the serious consequences of carrying a gun, and put an end to a tragic cycle of violence."

The campaign was designed by the advertising agency Draftfcb New York. The advertisements have a simple and direct message – GUNS = PRISON. Each poster features a visual, such as a gun forming the letter "L" in the word jail, and straightforward headlines that say, "All illegal guns in NYC come with a 3 ½ year guarantee." The advertisements will be displayed on space donated by corporate partners, including: space on 1,000 Verizon phone kiosks provided by Van Wagner; 500 posters for restaurants, clubs and bars and 50 backlit illuminated posters provided by Zoom Media & Marketing; 50 metrolight backlight display panels provided by Fuel Outdoor; 1,500 MTA bus interior ads provided by Titan, and thousands of subway interior ads provided by the MTA. The campaign also has the support of the Howard Gilman Foundation. These advertisements repeat and expand a message articulated in a public service advertising campaign launched in December 2006, with the Metropolitan

Transportation Authority. That campaign carried the message "Illegal possession of a loaded gun now carries a minimum sentence of 3 ½ years in prison. Period. End of Story."

"This important community service project generated a lot of passion and excitement within our creative department," said Brendan Ryan, former CEO and Chairman of Draftfcb New York and a member of the Board of Directors of the Citizens Crime Commission. "Everybody wanted to contribute ideas for the campaign that will surely drive awareness. Our message of GUNS = PRISON is purposely simple. Everyone can understand it. It's cut and dried--just like the new law."

"Throughout the annals of the New York City Police Department, gunfire has predominated as the cause in the 713 line of duty deaths of New York City police officers," said Police Commissioner Kelly. "Police Officer Russell Timoshenko was just the latest, killed by a gunman firing at close range. If the prospect of three and a half years in jail deters just one would-be killer from carrying a gun and taking the life of another police officer in another deadly confrontation, then the law and the efforts to publicize it are well worth it."

"In order to remain the safest big city in America, we will continue to hold accountable those that sell, possess and use illegal guns," said Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt. "At the Mayor's urging, New York now has the toughest law in the country for possession of an illegal loaded gun. Today's ad campaign once again broadcasts an unmistakable message: New Yorkers have zero tolerance for illegal guns."

"We're pleased to be donating space in more than 2,000 of our subway cars for this important city wide initiative aimed at protecting our customers and employees from the danger of illegal guns," said said Elliot Sander, MTA Executive Director and CEO. "Despite the efforts of the NYPD and the City's District Attorney's the MTA family, like too many families across the city has suffered loss as a result of the deadly violence linked to illegal guns. In memory of those employees, we pledge to do all we can to educate ourselves and our customers about violence linked to illegal guns and will continue to work with the Mayor's office, the NYPD and the law enforcement community on this and other efforts."

"This advertising campaign will help to raise awareness among New Yorkers that the mere possession of an illegal handgun will result in serious prison time," said District Attorney Brown. "It will help to deter gun demand and reduce gun violence. I applaud the Crime Commission and its partners for getting the message out. GUNS=PRISON is not simply a bumper sticker slogan. It is a clear and unequivocal statement of the law. If you are caught with an illegal handgun, you are going to prison. No question about it."

"Prosecuting illegal firearms cases is a longstanding priority for the Manhattan District Attorney's Office," said District Attorney Morgenthau. "If this anti-gun ad campaign brings home the message that those who possess illegal handguns will end up in state prison, it will perform an important public service."

"This law has given prosecutors yet another tool in our arsenal to target those who traffic and possess illegal guns in our community," said District Attorney Donovan. "I am grateful to Richard Aborn, the members of the Citizens Crime Commission and the outstanding corporate citizens who are taking part in this campaign to educate the public to the serious ramifications of illegal guns."

"The GUNS=PRISON campaign makes the point that illegal guns will simply not be tolerated in our City," said District Attorney Johnson. "That message must be spread. The new gun law has led to increased incarceration for gun offenders, and getting guns off our streets will make us all safer. Everyone should support this effort."

"Illegal weapons have long been a concern of ours because drug dealing and guns go hand in hand. I would like to thank Richard Aborn, the Citizens Crime Commission, and all those who have contributed to this public education campaign," said Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York.

The Commission is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan organization working to reduce crime

and to improve the criminal justice system and the safety of New York City. For more information on the Citizens Crime Commission of New York City, please visit: www.nycrimecommission.org.

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