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**FLAGGED BUSINESS INITIATIVE SHUTTERS PROBLEM BUSINESSES THAT HARBOR GANG
ACTIVITY**

*Increased Reporting and Collaboration Among City Departments Provides the Data Necessary to Take
Action Against Problem Businesses*

CHICAGO - Today, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced a progress report for the Flagged Business Initiative introduced in April. The initiative is a coordinated crime-fighting strategy targeting "problem" businesses in Chicago's neighborhoods. The strategy affects all establishments with business licenses with a focus on liquor and convenience stores – particularly those that serve as conduits for criminal activity. Working with neighborhood, religious and elected leaders, the administration linked violations and complaints received at various city agencies to build a case against these stores.

"Businesses must serve as anchors in their communities, but some serve as conduits for criminal activity, and those are the businesses that we are targeting," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "We are going after problem businesses in the same fashion we are going after violent street corners or known drug markets. Our communities must work together to identify problem businesses and remove them from our neighborhoods."

In the last week, two separate incidents highlight the value, importance, and appropriateness of the new crackdown on retail stores relative to gang activity. Today, BACP will recommend the revocation of the business license for a retail store, "Get Connected", located at 3647 W Division. After three gang members were hit by gunfire near the store, investigating vice officers visited the store after the shooting and arrested an employee and another male for possession of firearms and drugs. The location also had several municipal code violations and BACP will use the incident to strengthen the case against the business.

Over the weekend, located down the street from "Get Connected", a gun was recovered inside Nickel Liquors, at 3637 W. Division. Police officers conducted a street stop of several individuals at



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the location. The individuals fled the premises and the officers, continuing their investigation inside the store, discovered a blue steel handgun with a defaced serial number under a pallet of soda in a public area of the store. Just one day before the gun was discovered by police, Nickel liquors was cited by the Department of Buildings for code violations.

In both cases, these stores have been identified as places that offer protection and congregation for gang members. BACP will use this information and the business history to bolster a case against Nickel Liquors and remove the possibility that these businesses will factor into more criminal activity.

Another goal of the initiative is to identify problem businesses before they serve as conduits for more dangerous criminal activity. Data is compiled on Chicago businesses and filtered to identify problem trends. Problem businesses are placed on the monthly flagged business list and subject to increased inspections by all City departments. Further violations by a business on the list are cause for BACP to move for disciplinary action, including possible license revocation. The list currently tracks 37 businesses, 18 of which are now facing disciplinary action.

AM Dollar, a convenience store in the Uptown neighborhood was identified on the flagged business list in May and their business license revoked on July 3. In the last 12 months, AM Dollar had several tobacco, deceptive practice, sanitation and graffiti removal complaints as well as community complaints. Chicago police had an extensive list of calls to service for the location that included several reports of gang disturbance, shots fired, and one report of selling narcotics and person shot. With the increased data reporting by all of the City's regulators, a strong case was built against AM Dollar and the business will be shuttered before further violence can escalate at this location.

"Businesses are an important component of a healthy community, but when a business owner flagrantly ignores City regulations and creates a haven for criminal activity, it becomes a detriment to the neighborhood, and the City will take whatever actions are necessary to keep the community safe from such businesses" said Commissioner Rosemary Krimbel.

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