



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ICYMI: MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON BLASTS TRUMP FOR CUTTING \$468 MILLION FROM ATF, ALLOWING INFLUX OF ILLEGAL GUNS**

*Trump's cuts undermine existing partnerships between local and federal law enforcement to stop the flow of illegal guns into Chicago.*

**CHICAGO** – Today Mayor Brandon Johnson slammed President Donald Trump for playing political theatre with U.S. Armed Forces personnel while simultaneously gutting gun intelligence programs and laying off staff at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). Instead of wasting resources on a military occupation, Mayor Johnson is calling on the Trump administration to take action to stop the flow of illegal guns into Chicago from Republican-run states.

*Photos from the press conference are available [here](#).*

“Why did Trump cut \$468 million dollars from ATF’s budget in his nasty, signature bill? Why did he cut funding for the agency responsible for getting guns off our streets by 29%? Why did he cut 1,465 positions from an agency that is so critical to reducing gun violence? They cut funding from the agency that is actually stopping gun traffickers so that they could increase funding for ICE and Border Patrol,” said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**.

*Video of Mayor Johnson’s full remarks is available [here](#).*

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) has taken 24,000 guns off the street since Mayor Johnson took office. [CPD data](#) shows 60% of the guns recovered in Chicago originate from outside Illinois, with the majority coming from Republican-run states including Indiana, Mississippi, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama.

The President’s budget bill cuts the ATF’s budget by \$468 million. As a result, in FY26 the ATF will be funded at virtually the same level as it was in 2010. When adjusted for inflation



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and population growth this amounts to a 46% decrease in operational funding since 2010, according to the [Center for American Progress](#).

The Trump administration's budget is forcing ATF to shrink its staff by 29% to just 3,671 employees after budgeting for 5,136 positions in 2025, according to a [Department of Justice 2026 budget summary](#). This includes eliminating 541 of the 800 industry operations investigators, severely reducing ATF's capacity to inspect gun dealers. DOJ officials estimated the reductions would reduce ATF's capacity to regulate the firearms industries by approximately 40%.

Partnership with the ATF has been crucial to the CPD's efforts to keep guns off our streets. Just last month a joint investigation by ATF and CPD led to the arrests of 41 people and the recovery of 171 firearms and 64 machine gun conversion devices in the Chicago area, FOX32 Chicago [reported](#).

The City of Chicago welcomes meaningful partnerships with federal law enforcement as we continue to direct the full force of government towards [driving down violent crime](#). Year to date, Chicago has recorded a **21.6%** decline in overall violent crime, a **32.3%** in homicides, a **31.9%** decrease in robberies, and a **49%** decrease in vehicular hijackings.

A major contributor to this progress has been CPD's Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) which opened in spring 2024 through a joint partnership with the ATF Chicago Field Office. The CGIC allows CPD to link guns to shootings and investigate crimes more quickly and directly address and disrupt the flow of guns into the city.

The Trump administration's budget cuts will lead to fewer investigations and operations with local law enforcement while endangering community safety.

***Video of the full press conference is available [here](#).***

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