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**MAYOR EMANUEL, STATE'S ATTORNEY ALVAREZ AND POLICE SUPERINTENDENT
MCCARTHY INTRODUCE LEGISLATION STRENGTHENING ILLINOIS GUN LAWS**

*Legislation Requires Minimum Sentences for Gun Crimes; State's Attorney Issues Directive to
Prosecutors to Seek Maximum Penalties Until Law is Passed*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez and Police Superintendent Garry F. McCarthy today announced the introduction of statewide gun safety legislation that increases minimum sentencing for the most serious gun crimes and requires offenders to serve at least 85 percent of the imposed sentences.

"Criminals continue to escape with minor sentences for possessing and using firearms, and these light penalties do not reflect the severity of their crimes nor the damage they cause our communities," said Mayor Emanuel. "Increasing these penalties and requiring minimum sentences will ensure criminals are held accountable and discourage criminals from carrying and using guns."

"The unacceptable levels of illegal gun possession and gun violence clearly demonstrate that our current laws as they relate to gun offenders fail to provide sufficient deterrence," said State's Attorney Alvarez. "We cannot continue to rely on laws that are not working and expect a different result. As law enforcement leaders, we have an obligation to make the changes necessary to save lives and enhance public safety in our communities."

According to a recent University of Chicago Crime Lab analysis, the average sentence for a crime committed with a gun was slightly longer than two years, but offenders only served approximately one year in prison. After implementing a similar mandatory minimum law in New York, offenders began serving their full sentences while the murder rate and prison population fell by double digits.

"I've seen firsthand the impact that mandatory minimum sentencing can have on a large city," said Superintendent McCarthy. "By increasing penalties and requiring criminals to serve their punishment, we not only protect our children, our families and our communities, but we also prevent the impulsive retaliatory killings that plague our neighborhoods."

The proposed legislation would have the following impacts:

- Increase the penalty for felons who carry guns, from two years to three years, with subsequent offenses requiring a minimum of five years.
- Increase the minimum sentence for aggravated unlawful use of a weapon when the offender does not possess a valid FOID card and the gun is in their possession and loaded, from one year minimum to three years minimum.
- Add these specific gun crimes to the list of serious crimes that are subject to Truth in Sentences guidelines, requiring that offenders serve at least 85% of their sentence.

Until legislation is passed, the State's Attorney has issued a directive to all Assistant State's Attorneys to pursue the maximum possible sentence on gun crimes.

"While we are committed to getting this legislation passed, we cannot wait for it to wind its way through the legislature," Alvarez said. "We must act now to get gun-toting gangbangers off our streets. To that end, I will be issuing a directive to all prosecutors in my office that they shall seek only the maximum penalty allowable by the present law for gun offenders who are responsible for the violence that is plaguing our communities."

Also at the press conference, the Chicago Police Department displayed a sample of the firearms recovered among the more than 809 guns seized during the first six weeks of year, underscoring the need for commonsense gun legislation such as mandatory minimum sentencing.

CPD continues to recover more guns than any other city in the country. In 2012, the Department recovered more than 7,400 guns, including 300 assault weapons.

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