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Diverse Array of More than 100 Organizations Call on Congress to Reject Trump Administration Proposal to Weaken Controls on Firearms Exports

Administration's Proposed Rule Could Result in Proliferation of 3D-Printed Firearms

WASHINGTON, D.C. –Today a diverse group of more than a hundred organizations sent a letter to Congress in opposition to a Trump Administration proposal that would significantly weaken regulation and oversight of firearms exports. The Administration has proposed a rule to transfer controls of exports of semi-automatic firearms and ammunition from the United States Munition List under the authority of the Department of State to the less-stringent controls of the Department of Commerce. Those signing the letter in opposition to the transfer include: religious organizations representing 26 religious denominations, communities and organizations; national and state gun violence prevention organizations representing 14 states; as well as human rights, education, arms control, peace, and domestic violence prevention organizations. A complete list of the organizations is included below with the text of the letter.

The groups warn that the transfer to the Commerce Department of export controls for semi-automatic pistols, assault-style firearms, sniper rifles, and ammunition “will thwart congressional oversight and create new and unacceptable risks of exacerbating gun violence, human rights abuses, and armed conflict.”

In addition, the proposal would transfer control of the technical information and blueprints for potentially undetectable 3D-printed guns from State to Commerce, a move that could facilitate printing of 3D guns worldwide and make these weapons readily available to terrorist groups and other criminal elements.

The letter also explains, “The Administration’s proposal guts Congress’ authority to provide oversight of firearms exports. Currently, Congress is notified of firearms sales authorized by the State Department valued at \$1 million or more. No such notification requirements will exist if these weapons are transferred to Commerce control. In recent years, Congressional notification

has been an important backstop, helping forestall firearms transfers to repressive forces, such as those in Turkey and the Philippines.”

The organizations urge that “the weapons and ammunition that currently are controlled under U.S. Munition List Categories I-III belong there and should stay there.” The organizations urge Congress to prohibit the transfer of the designated firearms out of the U.S. Munitions List and maintain congressional oversight, as proposed in pending legislation, H.R. 1134, sponsored by Rep. Norma Torres (D-CA) and S. 459, sponsored by Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ).