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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES THAT ONE-THIRD OF GUN DEALERS IN
NEW YORK CITY LAWSUITS HAVE SETTLED WITH CITY**

*Two More Gun Dealers Agree to Appointment of a Special Master, Strict Parameters for
Monitoring Dealer Records and Inventories and a Penalty Structure for Future Violations*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today announced that two additional gun dealers named in the New York City lawsuit against dealers caught selling guns illegally have agreed to settlements with the City. This brings the total number of gun dealer settlements to 9, which is one-third of the 27 dealers named in the two lawsuits. Rooks Sales & Service of Bishopville, South Carolina and Town & Country Pawn Shop of Roanoke, Virginia have both agreed to settlements providing for a Special Master selected by the City and appointed by the court to monitor their firearms sales activities. They have each also agreed to submit to close monitoring of their records and inventory, which may include videotaping of their sales activities and continued undercover surveillance. The Special Master will ensure that each dealer is in full compliance with all laws regulating the sales and purchase of firearms. The agreements reached with these two dealers mirror those reached with previous dealers named in the New York City lawsuits filed on May 15 and December 7, 2006 and currently pending in the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of New York. Both gun dealers whose settlements were announced today were named in a lawsuit filed on December 7, 2006.

“Now one-third of the dealers named in our suit have agreed to play by the rules and make sure that guns don’t fall into the hands of criminals,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “The monitoring and accountability in these agreements will make sure that guns sold in these stores don’t end up on the streets of our cities. I encourage the remaining gun dealers named in our lawsuit to step up in the same way their colleagues have. These settlements will ensure that federal laws are followed while the rights of gun owners are respected.”

“These settlements will help to reduce the number of illegal guns in New York and to further drive down crime in the city,” said Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly.

“These further settlements show that our approach is gaining momentum,” said Corporation Counsel Michael A. Cardozo. “The Special Master has been meeting with the dealers who have joined our effort previously, and the results have been quite positive. We look forward to working

with these new dealers – and with those who we expect to reach future agreements with to implement common-sense solutions to the national problem of gun trafficking.”

As part of the agreement, a Special Master will be appointed and paid for by the City. The Special Master will have broad powers to monitor the gun dealers, including unlimited review of firearms-related records, which include trace requests and multiple handgun sale reports, as well as the ability to conduct unrestricted inspections of all firearm inventories. Employees will receive enhanced training to ensure these dealers conduct legal firearm sales and identify and refuse to sell to straw purchasers.

“We want to work with the gun dealers who want to play by the rules,” said John Feinblatt, the Mayor’s Criminal Justice Coordinator. “We don’t want to spend unnecessary time in the courtroom, we want to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. I am pleased that one-third of the dealers named in the lawsuits have agreed to settle.”

The agreement also establishes a penalty structure for non-compliance - including straw sales and other violations of federal, state or local firearms laws. Each dealer will post a bond. Fines incurred for each violation will be deducted from the bond. Fines under the agreement are \$1,000 for a first violation, \$2,000 for a second violation, and \$3,000 for third and subsequent violations. The agreements will expire after three consecutive years without a reported violation. At least every three months, the special master will certify whether the dealers have met their obligations.

The gun dealers in the lawsuits sold guns in violation of federal and state statutes. The lawsuit asked that the Court appoint a Special Master to monitor the dealers and require them to submit to enhanced training. The dealers were targeted primarily because of the large number of New York City crime guns that were traced back to them.

Mayor Bloomberg has made stopping the flow of illegal guns an important priority for his Administration. He has used tougher enforcement, new legislation and innovative litigation to combat illegal guns. Mayor Bloomberg and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino created and are co-chairs of the coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns. In January, the coalition hosted a national summit in Washington D.C. that was attended by more than 50 mayors from across the nation and from both political parties. The mayors met with a bi-partisan congressional task force on illegal guns, discussed best practices, and heard a presentation from the American Hunters and Shooters Association, a gun rights organization that supports common sense measures to fight illegal guns. Shortly after the summit, Mayors Bloomberg and Menino announced that 31 new Mayors joined the coalition, bringing the total number of Mayors over 150.

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