



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on November 17, 2010

Anti-gun Zealot Nominated to Head ATF

Rather than wait for the new Congress to be installed in January, President Obama decided to press forward for the Senate confirmation of Andrew Traver for Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).



As pro-Second Amendment scholar David Kopel [pointed out](#), The Second Amendment had a great night on [election day]. Across the nation, the right to arms is stronger than ever, and the stage has been set for constructive reforms in 2011. [In the] U.S. Senate: The net result of Tuesday was a gain of +6 votes on Second Amendment issues. In not a single U.S. Senate seat did the gun control lobby gain ground.

Traver was selected for the post [back in August](#), but the announcement was made on Tuesday after the election results were finalized, and the day after the start of the 111th Congress lame-duck session. Traver joined the ATF as a special agent in Chicago in 1987 after a stint in the Navy, and has served as a special agent of the Chicago Field Division of the ATF since 2004.

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The bureau's history [reaches back](#) to 1886 where the agency was part of the U.S. Treasury Department, but grew substantial legs in 1968 after the Gun Control Act was passed. Following the 9/11 attacks, the ATF was transferred to the Justice Department, where it regulates via licensing the sale, possession and transportation of firearms, ammunition and explosives in interstate commerce. The bureau has a budget exceeding \$1 billion annually and employs 5,000 including 2,400 special agents.

Special agents have the broadest authority of any federal agency, with the power to enforce any statute in the United States Code. Specifically, ATF special agents have [the] lead investigative authority on any federal crime committed with a firearm, and while the agency may cooperate with other federal agencies, *it is free to operate independently of any of them.*

Traver's most obvious link to those opposed to Second Amendment rights is through his Summit Membership in the *International Association of Chiefs of Police* (IACP). Following their Great Lakes States Summit on Gun Violence in April of 2007, the IACP published its report *Taking a Stand: Reducing Gun Violence in Our Communities*. Included in its many recommendations were the following:

- Establish a best practices" protocol for voluntary gun surrender programs
- Destroy all firearms that come into the possession of any law enforcement agency (even if such firearms were initially stolen and then recovered)
- Track and follow all private gun sales in a national data base with a mandatory background check on the purchaser



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- Limit the sale of multiple handguns
- Mandate a ballistic fingerprint for every gun that is sold
- Require that every gun come with a lock
- Require that every owner provide for a federally regulated safe storage for his weapons, and prosecute those who fail to comply with [those] safe storage laws.
- Enact legislation to allow federal health and safety oversight of the firearms industry.

Most chillingly, recommendation #22 was: The federal government should increase funding to the ATF for personnel and technical assistance to combat gun violence.

Executive director for the National Rifle Associations Institute for Legislative Action (NRA-ILA) Chris Cox investigated the IACP after their summit and discovered it had been funded by the left-wing [Joyce Foundation](#).

That's a familiar name to longtime readers. The Joyce Foundation has pumped tens of millions of dollars into the coffers of gun ban groups over the years. The Violence Policy Center (VPC), an unashamed promoter of a total ban on guns, collected more than \$1 million of Joyce money.

The IACP newsletter proudly notes that the Joyce Foundation has made more than \$30 million in grants to groups seeking public health solutions that offer the promise of reducing gun deaths and injuries in America.

Some of those beneficiaries of the Joyce Foundation include Mayors Against Illegal Guns Coalition, Handgun Epidemic Lowering Plan Network, the Indiana Partnership to Prevent Firearm Violence, the Legal Community Against Violence, and the Violence Policy Center.

With Travers public support of the IACP and his tacit acknowledgement of the funding behind it, it should be no surprise that President Obama has selected him to take the reins at the ATF.

Photo of Andrew Traver: AP Images



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