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**GUN TRAFFICKING CREW DISMANTLED WITH 1,611-COUNT INDICTMENT OF**  
**TENNESSEE MAN AND FOUR NYC RESIDENTS FOLLOWING**  
**LONG-TERM INVESTIGATION**

*Defendants Allegedly Sold Firearms in Queens and the Bronx That Were Purchased in Southern State;  
Police Removed 182 Handguns, 136 High-Capacity Ammo Feeders and Cache of Bullets;  
Four Defendants Face Up to 50 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by New York City Police Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell, today announced a 1,611-count indictment and the arrests of five individuals allegedly involved in a gun trafficking ring using the notorious Iron Pipeline to smuggle guns purchased in Knoxville, Tennessee, which were then sold illegally in Queens County. Law enforcement officials removed more than 180 illegal weapons from our neighborhoods, along with 136 high-capacity magazines and hundreds of rounds of ammunition during the course of an 11-month-long investigation, titled *Operation Hotcakes*.

District Attorney Katz said, “Illegal gun traffickers who flood our neighborhoods with dangerous firearms put every resident of our borough at grave risk. We have seen far too many instances of guns, purchased down South and trafficked into New York, that are then recovered at devastating crime scenes, leaving bloodshed and tragedy on our streets. Cutting off the notorious Iron Pipeline supply chain of these deadly weapons is a top priority for my administration. I want to thank the NYPD’s Firearms Investigation Unit for working closely with my Office’s Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau in bringing these defendants to justice. We will continue our efforts against the proliferation of gun violence in this borough.”

Police Commissioner Sewell said, “Building long-term investigations to stop accused gun traffickers from funneling illegal firearms up the Iron Pipeline is one layer of the NYPD’s relentless work to eradicate gun violence in New York City. I commend our NYPD detectives and prosecutors in Queens for their sustained focus in this case to interdict guns before they hit our streets. This is the work we all must continue – and we will – because the lives of New Yorkers we serve depend on it.”

The District Attorney identified the defendants as Anthony “Tony” Sanford, 57, of Jamaica, Queens; Oliver Sanford, 40, of Springfield Gardens, Queens; Jonathan Harris, 28, of Starling Avenue, the Bronx; Thomas Parsley, 44, of Mickle Avenue, the Bronx; and Richard “Rick” Horne, 70, of Blountville, TN. The defendants were variously indicted by a Queens County grand jury on July 19, 2022 on charges of criminal sale of a firearm, criminal possession of a weapon and conspiracy. **(See Addendum #1 for further details on defendants).**

The indictments allege that the ring operated with Jonathan Harris as the main dealer, Richard Horne as

the main supplier and Anthony Sanford, his nephew Oliver Sanford, and Thomas Parsley acting as the principal re-sellers and distributors of the weapons sold across Queens and Bronx Counties.

DA Katz said the investigation began in two separate parts: Following prior intelligence gathered during the summer of 2021, defendant Anthony Sanford sold five handguns as well as .357 and .40 caliber ammunition to an undercover police officer in August and October 2021 in Queens. Sanford's nephew, Oliver, was observed conducting counter surveillance during both transactions.

According to the charges, a total of 22 buys were allegedly completed between the undercover officer and defendant Anthony Sanford between August 2021 and April 2022 in and around Jamaica and Springfield Gardens, yielding 145 firearms and 99 high-capacity ammunition feeding devices.

An unrelated investigation, initiated in November 2021, revealed the workings of an arms dealer selling guns on the streets of the Bronx, later identified as defendant Jonathan Harris. NYPD detectives were able to link Harris to the Sanfords, demonstrating a larger illegal gun operation spanning the two boroughs. As part of the conspiracy, DA Katz said, the Sanfords were allegedly observed by law enforcement officials as having communicated with defendant Harris on a regular basis in regard to smuggled weapons available for sale.

In January 2022, the Court authorized electronic surveillance of defendants Anthony Sanford, Oliver Sandford, and Harris, which showed numerous trips taken by Harris to the Knoxville, Tennessee area, especially during gun shows taking place in the area. Additional surveillance was authorized by the Court in March 2022 that uncovered defendant Harris allegedly traveling to the Knoxville area, specifically for the purpose of meeting with a gun supplier, later identified as defendant Richard Horne, a Tennessee resident. Subsequent intercepted calls between Harris and Horne revealed overt discussions of makes, models, and prices of the firearms Harris would allegedly purchase.

Furthermore, DA Katz said, laws regulating the sale and possession of firearms in Tennessee are much more lenient than New York and other states, deferring to federal law when regulating firearms dealers and private vendors. Federal law prohibits persons from engaging in the business of dealing in firearms without a license and requires that sellers run a National Crime Information Center background check on purchasers. According to the charges, defendant Horne intentionally failed to abide by such regulations under the guise of a "private vendor," while dealing in a large quantity of firearms he knew would be smuggled to New York. On April 23, 2022, Horne was recorded warning Harris about federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) monitoring a gun show during which they were planning to meet.

Continuing, DA Katz said, upon completing the transactions in Tennessee, defendant Harris allegedly would contact defendant Oliver and his other customer, defendant Thomas Parsley, to arrange the delivery of the guns to both men in Queens and the Bronx. According to the charges, using investigative tools, NYPD detectives carried out a vehicle stop on defendant Parsley in Queens following a scheduled pick-up from Harris in the Bronx on March 31, 2022. The vehicle stop resulted in the recovery of two shopping bags each containing four loaded pistols in individual gun cases. Officers subsequently conducted an arrest of defendant Harris upon his return home from Tennessee on April 30, 2022. The arrest resulted in the recovery of 23 firearms from a plastic tote storage in the trunk of the defendant's vehicle as well as another six guns from two bags also located in the trunk.

On July 20, 2022, law enforcement officials arrested defendant Horne with assistance from the ATF Field Office and the United States Attorney for the District of Tennessee.

DA Katz said, throughout the duration of the entire investigation, the defendants allegedly sold the undercover officers and were otherwise found in possession of 182 firearms, 136 high-capacity magazines, and

hundreds of rounds of ammunition. (See Addendum #2 for further details on the recovered firearms)

The investigation was conducted by New York City Police Department Detective Ruben Cespedes, with the assistance of Detective Alejandro Valderrama, under the supervision of Sergeants Eric Francis and Daniel Nicoletti, Lieutenant Ruben Pagan, Captain Jeffrey Heilig, and Inspector Brian Gill, the commanding officer of the Firearms Suppression Section and under Assistant Chief Christopher McCormack, of the Criminal Task Force Division of the NYPD's Detective Bureau which is run by Chief of Detectives James W. Essig.

Assisting in the investigation, and now prosecuting the case, is Assistant District Attorney Charles L. Dunn, of the Queens District Attorney's Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Jonathan R. Sennett, Bureau Chief and Philip Anderson, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

*Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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**Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).**



## **ADDENDUM #1**

**ANTHONY “TONY” SANFORD**, 57, of Jamaica, Queens, was indicted on July 19, 2022 by a Queens County grand jury on seven counts of criminal sale of a firearms in the first degree, six counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the first degree, three counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the second degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree possessing five or more firearms, 21 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (3), 244 counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree subsection (1), 145 counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree subsection (2), 145 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree subsection (1), six counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree subsection (5)(i), 99 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (8), and conspiracy in the second degree. The defendant was arraigned on July 21, 2022, before Queens Criminal Court Judge David Kirschner, who set the next court date for September 15, 2022. Sanford faces up to 50 years in prison, if convicted. Defendant is currently represented by Edward Muccini, Esq.

**OLIVER SANFORD**, 40, of Springfield Gardens, Queens, was indicted on July 19, 2022 by a Queens County grand jury on seven counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the first degree, six counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the first degree, three counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the second degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (2), 17 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (3), 236 counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree subsection (1), 138 counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree subsection (2), 138 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree subsection (1), five counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree subsection (5)(i), 98 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (8) and conspiracy in the second degree. The defendant was arraigned on July 21, 2022, before Queens Criminal Court Judge David Kirschner, who set the next court date for September 15, 2022. Sanford faces up to 50 years in prison, if convicted. Defendant is currently represented by Joe Amsel, Esq.

**JONATHAN HARRIS**, 28, of Starling Avenue, the Bronx was indicted on July 19, 2022 by a Queens County grand jury on seven counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the first degree, seven counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the first degree, four counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the second degree, five counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (2), 25 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (3), 256 counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree subsection (1), 177 counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree subsection (2), five counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree, 139 counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (8) and conspiracy in the second degree. The defendant was arraigned on July 21, 2022 before Queens Criminal Court Judge David Kirschner, who set the next court date for August 1, 2022. Harris faces up to 50 years in prison, if convicted. Defendant is currently represented by Christopher Whitehair, Esq.

**THOMAS PARSLEY**, 44, of Mickle Avenue, the Bronx was indicted on July 19, 2022 by a Queens County grand jury on one count of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (2), eight counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (3), eight counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree, eight counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree, nine counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree subsection (8) and conspiracy in the second degree. The defendant was arraigned on July 21, 2022, before Queens Criminal Court Judge David Kirschner, who set the next court date for September 15, 2022. Parsley faces up to 20 years in prison, if convicted. Defendant is currently represented by Ronald Popo, Esq.

**RICHARD “RICK” HORNE**, 70, of Blountville, TN was indicted on July 19, 2022 by a Queens County grand jury on eight counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the first degree, one count of criminal sale of a firearm in the second degree, 262 counts of criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree and conspiracy in the second degree. The defendant was arrested in Tennessee on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and is pending extradition. Harris faces up to 50 years in prison, if convicted.

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#### **ADDENDUM #2: RECOVERED FIREARMS**

<b>18 9mm Taurus G2 Pistols</b>	<b>4 .380 Bersa Thunder Pistols</b>	<b>2 .22 GSG Pistols</b>
<b>13 9mm SCCY CPX-1 Pistols</b>	<b>3 .40 Springfield Armory Pistols</b>	<b>2 .22 Taurus Pistols</b>
<b>10 .38 Taurus Revolvers</b>	<b>3 9mm Keltec Pistols</b>	<b>2 .25 Sundance Industries Pistols</b>
<b>10 9mm Glock 19 Pistols</b>	<b>4 9mm Sig Sauer Pistols</b>	<b>2 .357 Taurus Revolvers</b>
<b>8 9mm Canik Pistols</b>	<b>3 .380 Glock 42 Pistols</b>	<b>2 .38 Smith &amp; Wesson Revolvers</b>
<b>6 9mm Ruger Pistols</b>	<b>2 .40 Taurus Pistols</b>	<b>2 .380 Ruger Pistols</b>
<b>6 9mm SCCY CPX-2 Pistols</b>	<b>3 9mm Girsan Pistols</b>	<b>2 .40 Glock 27 Pistols</b>
<b>7 9mm Smith &amp; Wesson Pistols</b>	<b>3 9mm SAR Pistols</b>	<b>2 9mm FMK Pistols</b>

<b>2 9mm FN Pistols</b>	<b>.25 Phoenix Arms Pistol</b>	<b>.40 Glock 22 Pistol</b>
<b>2 9mm Glock 26 Pistols</b>	<b>.25 Raven Arms Pistol</b>	<b>.40 Glock 23 Pistol</b>
<b>2 9mm Glock 43 Pistols</b>	<b>.32 Keltec Pistol</b>	<b>.40 Kahr Arms Pistol</b>
<b>2 9mm Glock 48 Pistols</b>	<b>.32 North American Arms Pistol</b>	<b>.40 Sig Sauer Pistol</b>
<b>2 9mm Springfield Arms Hellcats</b>	<b>.32 Smith &amp; Wesson Revolver</b>	<b>.45 Charles Daly Pistol</b>
<b>2 9mm Springfield Arms XDS</b>	<b>.32 VZOR Pistol</b>	<b>.45 Glock 36 Pistol</b>
<b>2 .380 Taurus Pistols</b>	<b>.357 Glock 32 Pistol</b>	<b>.45 HK Pistol</b>
<b>2 9mm Taurus G3 Pistols</b>	<b>.357 Smith &amp; Wesson Pistol</b>	<b>.45 Taurus Pistol</b>
<b>2 9mm Taurus Slim Pistols</b>	<b>.38 Charter Arms Revolver</b>	<b>.45 Tisas Pistol</b>
<b>.22 American Arms Pistol</b>	<b>.38 Rock Island Revolver</b>	<b>10mm Glock 20 Pistol</b>
<b>.22 Bryco Arms Pistol</b>	<b>.38 Rohm Revolver</b>	<b>10mm Glock 40 Pistol</b>
<b>.22 Charter Arms Revolver</b>	<b>.380 AMT Pistol</b>	<b>9mm Beretta Pistol</b>
<b>.22 ISSC Pistol</b>	<b>.380 Davis Industries Pistol</b>	<b>9mm FB Radom Pistol</b>
<b>.22 Llama Pistol</b>	<b>.380 Diamondback Arms Pistol</b>	<b>9mm Ghost Gun Pistol</b>
<b>.22 Ruger Pistol</b>	<b>.380 FI Industries Pistol</b>	<b>9mm Glock 17 Pistol</b>
<b>.22 Walther Pistol</b>	<b>.380 Keltec Pistol</b>	<b>9mm Para Ordnance Pistol</b>
<b>.25 Beretta Pistol</b>	<b>.380 Smith &amp; Wesson Pistol</b>	<b>9mm Taurus GX4 Pistol</b>
<b>.25 Jennings Firearms Pistol</b>	<b>.380 Walther Pistol</b>	<b>9mm Zastava Pistol</b>

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